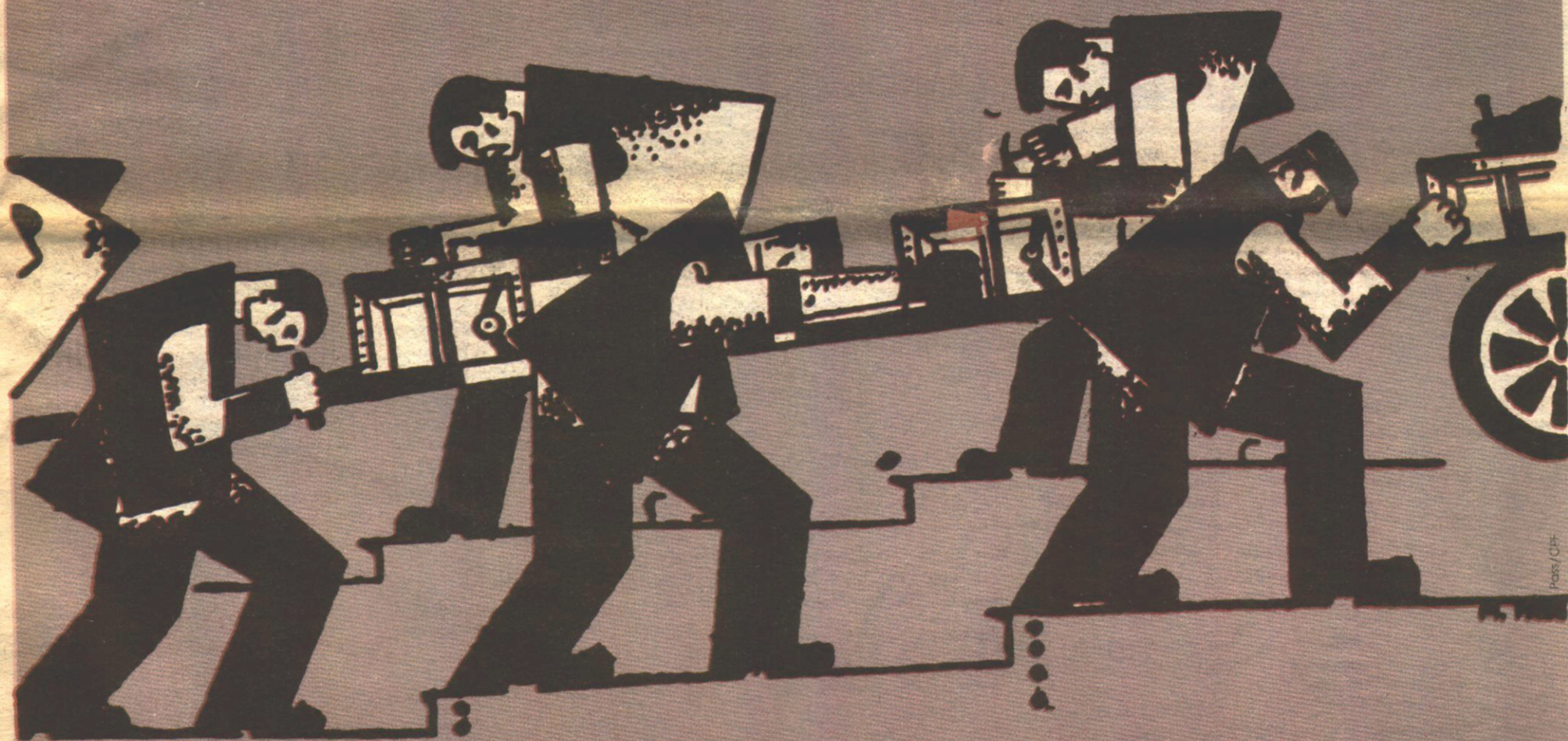




Can the unions make it strong?

Barbara Garson,
Robert Howard, David Moberg
and Nicholas von Hoffman
report on challenges
to labor.



Bani Sadr
talks to
Diana Johnstone
Page 7

THE INSIDE STORY



Many of the Labour candidates who stood for the Greater London Council are supporters of Tony Benn.

London Bridge is leaning left

By Mervyn Jones

L O N D O N

Is London under the thumb of a Marxist clique? Unlikely though it may seem, that's the suggestion being put around since a Labour administration with a left-wing flavor took control of city government in May 1981.

As a rule, municipal government evokes little excitement here. Only about 40 percent of the voters go to the polls, compared with 80 percent when the House of Commons is being elected. And the voting tends to reflect the current popularity of the parties at the national level—much like an enlarged opinion poll—rather than being decided on city issues.

It's also difficult to personalize the conflicts, because figure in traditional pageantry without political power, chosen by a tiny electorate in the old City of London financial district.) The man who more of less corresponds to prime minister is called the Leader of the Council and is selected by his colleagues, not by popular vote. At most times, nine out of 10 Londoners would be unable to name him.

London's boundaries, drawn in 1889, produced a mainly working-class population, with the suburbs belonging to the surrounding counties. In modern times, the Labour Party always won the elections. The controlling figure for a long period was Herbert Morrison, son of a Cockney policeman, a sound administrator of immovably right-wing outlook. His Labour successors, until recently, were men in the same mould.

In 1964 a Conservative government legislated to extend the boundaries, taking in the suburbs and creating a "metro" administration. The London County Council became the Greater London Council. This was naturally denounced by Labour as a gerrymander to ensure Tory domination. But in practice, control of the GLC has changed hands according to the swing of the national political pendulum. The Tories had a majority from 1977 to 1981.

By the time the 1981 election came around, the Labour left had made headway in many of the 92 districts that elect GLC members. Many Labour candidates for the Council were admirers of Tony Benn and devoted to radical ideas. If Labour won—and Labour was

strongly tipped to win—there would be no resumption of the Morrison tradition. The Tories plastered the city with posters showing landmarks such as Big Ben and St. Paul's enveloped in a menacing red cloud.

Labour came in with 50 seats, against 41 Tories and one Liberal. The victory wasn't as emphatic as in most of the British cities that voted on the same day. That may have been simply because the north of England was swinging to Labour more strongly than the south, but cautious Labour politicians (including those displaced as candidates by the new faces) were quick to say that the radical posture of many GLC candidates had forfeited middle-of-the-road votes.

The new Labour councillors at once proceeded to choose a new leader. Constitutionally they were within their rights, since the appointment of a leader is the first business after an election. But in the past the man who has led the party in opposition and in the election campaign has always seen his position ratified. This time, eyebrows were raised. The displaced leader, Andrew Mackintosh, was a "moderate" who couldn't truthfully be called right-wing, so he was considered by some to have had a raw deal. The man who took over the job, Ken Livingstone, stands uncompromisingly on the left. He has become, inevitably, the target of furious attacks.

More houses, lower fares.

Livingstone's program—or rather, as all of it was democratically adopted and presented to the voters, Labour's program—has three main planks. One is an energetic resumption of construction for public housing. It has been brought to a virtual halt under Tory rule, and the sale of Council-owned houses to private buyers has further reduced the number of units available to people on an almost theoretical waiting list. As old houses and apartment blocks decay, thousands of working-class Londoners are living in slums.

Second, the GLC will make a 25 percent cut in city transit fares and devote a hefty investment to improving the service. As visitors are dismayed to find, London tube (subway) fares are about the most expensive in the world, following rises that have been repeated once or even twice a year. The service is fairly poor, and the bus service is disastrous, with 40-minute waits by no means a rare experience.

Third, there are ambitious plans for industrial investment to regenerate parts of London that lack employment opportunities. Taking a broad picture, unemployment in London is less severe than in the north or in Wales and Scotland, and a big city with an entertainment area always provides a number of unofficial jobs. But the condition of some districts—notably those with a large black population, and the old waterfront that has been hit by the closure of the docks and the switch to deep-water ports on the coast—is as bad as anywhere in Britain.

Obviously, all this will cost a lot of money. Rates (property taxes) are due to rise sharply to the consternation of people with large houses and owners of office buildings. But the rates provide only about 40 percent of the GLC's income. The balance is supplied, under long-standing arrangements, by the government. And the minister concerned—Michael Heseltine, Secretary for the Environment—has made it clear that he won't underwrite, and will if possible frustrate, expenditure on the scale to which the GLC is pledged.

Heseltine has just emerged victorious from a battle with the Labour councillors of Scotland's Lothian Region, which includes Edinburgh. Lothian has had phenomenally low bus fares, frozen for years despite

inflation, as well as excellent schools and welfare services. By threatening to withhold funds, Heseltine has forced the region to raise the fares and to implement cuts in the school budget that will mean the dismissal of 1,000 teachers.

The weapons in the government's hands include one that is direly personal. If councillors vote for spending judged to be "unjustified," they are personally liable and can be surcharged. They can lose their houses and other personal possessions, and can in the end be jailed as debtors. This power was, in fact, used against Labour councillors in one district in 1970.

Heseltine and Livingstone are inevitably on a collision course. Heseltine won in Lothian because Labour had a very slender majority and a few Labour councillors, unwilling to fight to the last ditch or to risk the disaster of surcharging, broke ranks. He will hope for a similar defection by GLC members who sympathize with the ousted Mackintosh or who don't go all the way with the ambitious plans. Resolute followers of Livingstone are reckoned at only about 30 of the 50 Labour councillors.

At a personal level, the antagonists present an intriguing contrast. Heseltine, wealthy and with a playboy past, invariably appears in natty suits. Ken (it's never Kenneth) Livingstone is the man you wouldn't notice in a crowd. He has practically no money of his own, and lives in one room of a house belonging to friends. He doesn't own a car, can't drive, and goes to his office by bus. (He's fanatically determined to improve the bus service if he does nothing else.) Not the sort of man to own a dog, he shares his room with his pet salamanders. He claims that they are the only animals that never attack other animals.

It's becoming clear that Livingstone is a man of determination who enjoys his job, including the prospect of battles. He has also emerged as a personality, almost in the manner of a New York mayor; more Londoners know his name, it's safe to say, than that of any previous leader. He owes this in part to a caustic wit. Offered a seat at Prince Charles' wedding, Livingstone chose to go to his office and catch up with mail. To the press, he remarked: "My own wedding was bad enough." (Livingstone is divorced.)

He is always ready, too, to come out with decided opinions. Reporters know by now that he'll say what he thinks about anything from nuclear weapons to gay rights. (The GLC will shortly declare London a nuclear-free zone, and is refusing to take part in the charade of civil defense.)

He has caused a furor by his opposition to government policy in Northern Ireland and his sympathy with the IRA hunger strikers. In an interview with the British services' radio station, he said that he would like to see both the Army and the IRA lay down their arms and go home. Demands have been made that he should be charged under the Incitement to Disaffection Act, a 1934 law (hurried through after a Navy mutiny) that punishes those who dissuade servicemen from their duty. A militant pacifist has, indeed, been sentenced for distributing leaflets to soldiers informing them of ways to evade service in Ulster. Presumably the authorities will have more sense than to bring a charge against Livingstone—but it gave the resentful Mackintosh a chance to say that the GLC couldn't afford a leader prone to such regrettable opinions.

Though this old city still looks the same, they're beginning to talk about the People's Republic of London.

Former *In These Times* correspondent Mervyn Jones has been filing a series of reports on British politics.

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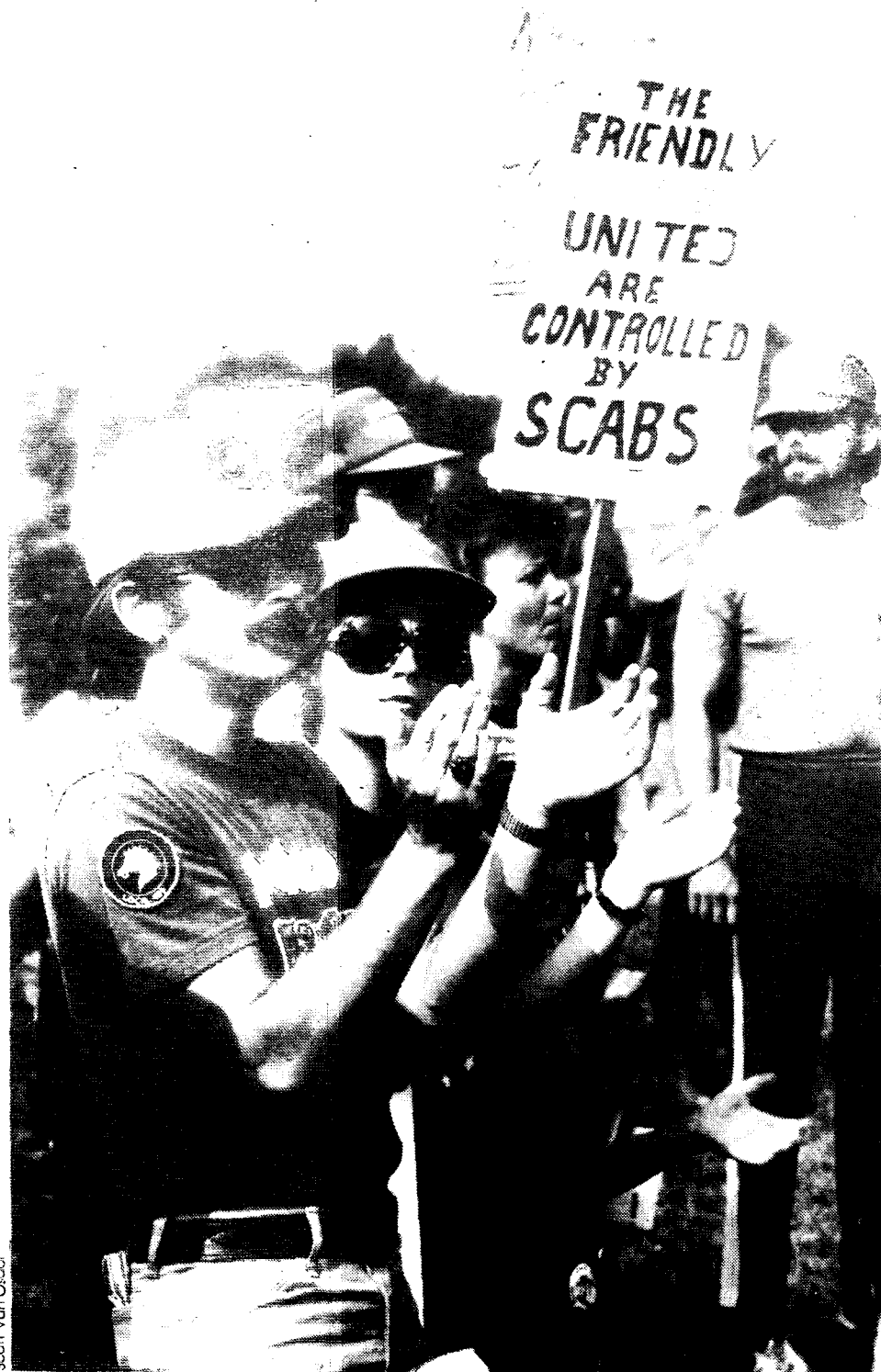
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IN THESE TIMES



As the law now stands, PATCO supporters face a number of penalties if they take any direct action on behalf of the air controllers.

Eventually labor must confront the PATCO issues

By David Moberg

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE AIR controllers' strike—and Reagan's effort to break it—will only become clear in years to come. If the controllers can salvage even a moral victory, their strike may contribute to recognition of federal workers' right to bargain and possibly to strike. Even defeat could catalyze the labor movement to fight more effectively on its own behalf.

Some labor officials worry that Reagan's handling of the PATCO strike could make their lot worse immediately on several fronts—union-busting, scapegoating public employees, provoking a general assault on labor to tame inflation. But the foundations for such problems existed in both economic conditions and Reagan policies before the PATCO strike. Beyond the body-blow to the controllers and their union, the main effects of Reagan's attack will be on the political climate of the country. Labor could still turn that battle around.

The strike is also illustrative of some longer-term challenges to the labor movement that are independent of Reagan—organizing white collar, especially professional and technical workers; grappling with new computer-based technology; and developing new strategies in both collective bargaining and politics.

Unions have faced greater management resistance in organizing and more decertification elections in the past decade. Reagan's actions may have a "bolstering effect" on such efforts, according to Charles MacDonald, executive assistant to the AFL-CIO director of organizing. "It conveys a picture of unions as irresponsible and more trouble than you bargain for. It's certainly not going to help things any. Maybe he's going to legitimize even the most blatant anti-union activities." One government official worried that potential members "will be looking and saying, 'What do we need a union for?'"

But it is unlikely that the labor movement will be deeply threatened by a new wave of decertifications. Between 1970 and 1977 decertification did triple, with a loss of 22,398 members to the labor movement in 1977. The figures have leveled off since then and still represent a sorry but comparatively small erosion of labor's strength.

Even without Reagan, state and local officials have in the past decade been fiscally and politically pressed to take a hard line with public employees, and public workers have increasingly resorted to strikes. But even when local officials have tried to bring in strikebreakers or to fire strikers, they have generally been forced to rehire nearly all striking workers.

Teachers accounted for nearly one-fourth of workers involved in govern-

ment strikes in 1979, but this year it appears that with some significant exceptions—Boston and Philadelphia, for example, where school authorities violated contracts by dismissing tenured teachers—teachers are arriving at settlements fairly easily with little sign of Reaganite intimidation. Also, a postal workers' union leader who was critical of this year's contract doubted that Reagan's PATCO stance actually swung the result of the balloting, though it probably did contribute to the unusually wide margin of acceptance.

Ted Clark, an attorney with the firm of Seyfarth, Shaw, Fairweather and Geraldson—well-known in labor circles as hard-line labor relations consultants to public officials—said, "In the public sector I think [Reagan's actions] will stiffen the backs of some municipal or state officials. I think it will be short-term, over the next six months. After that it will be negligible."

With regard to public employee organizing, he noted, "It's a double-edged sword. I'm not sure which way it will cut. It might discourage organizing as workers see unions as relatively futile. But some employees might say, 'If the president can take this kind of action then perhaps we need protection.'"

In any case, he argues, local officials do not have the options that the president does. Few people know any air controllers, who are scattered throughout the country, but even in a medium-sized city nearly everyone knows a teacher or some other public employee. Firings could generate public backlash against local officials.

Bernard Demczuk, political organizer for the American Federation of Government Employees, reports Reagan's intimidation may be failing in his own backyard. "Our letters are running five to one in support of PATCO," he says. "More of our members are talking about how federal workers should have the right to strike. Our people in metropolitan District of Columbia have been engaged every week in a demonstration," and are currently bargaining for the right to strike as well as expanding coalitions with other unions and community groups.

Crunching wages.

Though some economists suggest that Reagan's hard line against PATCO and his offer of a skimpy 4.8 percent wage increase to non-military federal employees presage an effort to fight inflation by restraining all workers' wages, general economic conditions will probably have more impact. In the first half of this year, median wage increases in new contracts ran about 10 percent, slightly above last year's level, though some slippage began to show late in the summer. But overall the median real income dropped 5.5 percent in 1980, the sharpest decline since 1947. The proportion of officially poor people rose from 11.7 to 13.0 percent, an unusually large increase.

In addition to the urgency of supporting the immediately victimized air controllers, the PATCO strike points to some longer-range issues. Only 18 percent of all white-collar workers are now organized. Though a 1977 survey showed non-union white-collar workers about one-fourth less likely to support unionization than blue-collar workers, unions have actually enjoyed greater success in white-collar elections, winning 59 percent in 1979 (compared to 48 percent of all NLRB elections involving unorganized workers).

Many professional and technical workers have deep grievances about pay inequities—such as the controllers' sense of losses due to inflation and much lower salaries than pilots' pay—rather than complaints about low pay in itself.

But the air controllers' strike also highlights another aspect of technical and professional workers' demands. They want greater control over their work, as well as more responsibility and autonomy. Often they are frustrated in trying to preserve what they see as the social value of their work, like the controllers'

striking for better equipment so they can maintain airport safety. Nurses, residents and interns in many hospitals in recent years have carried on militant strikes for such non-wage goals.

But the labor movement has been slow to develop new organizing and bargaining strategies that would appeal to these professional and technical workers. They are, nonetheless, crucial: in the last decade their numbers increased twice as fast as all occupations, and in coming years they will continue to expand only slightly less rapidly, due to an expected deceleration in growth in education. With union representation of non-farm employees down to 24.5 percent (from 26.5 percent in 1978); such new skilled workers are critical not only for labor's institutional survival but equally important for its political strength.

Unions and computers.

Many of these workers—like the air controllers—will be working with computer-based technology. And in many cases it will be easier than with the air controllers to replace striking workers with supervisors or temporarily to automate their work. Such computerized technology can be used either to expand responsibility and autonomy or else to make discipline by centralized management more sophisticated. Workers have a stake in how the new technology is designed and introduced, but labor unions have been slow to make that a central point in organizing or bargaining.

The biggest problem facing the labor movement, though, is generating solidarity and common purpose. PATCO is not the only union with a go-it-alone attitude. But the results are instructive: if the air controllers had carefully cultivated allies and built up public understanding beforehand, Reagan might have faced greater political costs in breaking the union, while other unions might have united in stronger support.

Now they are reluctant to undertake the great risk in work stoppages to support PATCO. The Railway Labor Act, which governs air transport, does not have the strong prohibition against secondary boycotts included in the National Labor Relations Act. However, no-strike clauses in contracts of other air transport unions, the illegality of the PATCO strike and other legal complications open unions supporting PATCO by collectively not crossing picket lines to the possibility of immense fines and other penalties. Individual workers could also be fined. The legal situation is not clear-cut but most lawyers seem to agree that other unions, such as the Pilots or Machinists, would risk heavy penalties.

But even if unions in the future eliminated their no-strike clauses and got Congress to repeal the secondary boycott restraints, they would still face two challenges. First, fewer strikes can be waged successfully simply through exercise of the industrial might of withholding labor. The controllers thought that they had the clout and were dreadfully wrong. Public opinion and non-union allies need to be mobilized. Contemplating tough negotiations in several big cities next year, AFSCME aide Don McClure says, "One thing we'll do before negotiating is make people aware of what the issues are, what the problems are."

Strikes and all union activities are, as they have always been, political, and that is becoming more true. But labor is scattered, weak, ignored and inconsistent politically. When labor continues to contribute money to a politician, such as Sen. Alan Dixon (D-IL), who publicly supported Reagan's attack on the air controllers, there is little wonder that its bark is later ignored. "The real answer to this situation," Machinist spokesman Larry Rubin said, "is to organize not only the unorganized workers but the labor movement itself to be an effective political force again, to develop a new force speaking for working people."

Nicholas von Hoffman's assessment of the American labor movement appears on page 13.

SHORT

Tremors in the heartland

Mankato, report Sheryl Larson and Jay Walljasper, is a quiet little city in the middle of the rich farm belt in southern Minnesota—a place where the Reagan administration might expect its guns-sans-butter budget to be swallowed without much difficulty. But budget axman David Stockman found out otherwise on Aug. 31. Scheduled to speak at a \$100-a-head benefit for a local conservative-minded congressman, Republican Rep. Tom Hagedorn, Stockman was greeted at Mankato's downtown Holiday Inn by 50 protesters chanting "Stockman says cut back, we say fight back."

While Stockman sipped cocktails with a circle of friendly Republicans, the crowd swelled to more than 350, filling the outdoor mall between the cocktail lounge and the room where Stockman was scheduled to speak. Stockman's drinking buddies took it pretty well: Making their way across the mall, several waved wads of bills at the crowd; others shouted "Get a job!" Stockman saved his breath.

Another tear-jerker

On the occasion of a Commerce Department assembly commemorating Black History Month, Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige spoke movingly of how he was so shaken by the assassination of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. that he brought along some black community leaders when he flew his private plane to the funeral. The only event, Baldrige continued, that ever elicited in him the same level of emotion was Ronald Reagan's inauguration.

A cautionary tale

Jim Young reports that western Pennsylvania's controversial "free enterprise" public radio and television organization has been going through a major personnel shake-up, revealing serious financial problems in the running of the corporation's WQLN radio and television outlets. Company boss Robert Chitester, whose preference for corporate money and right-wing programming was noted some time ago in these pages and more recently in the Aug. 17 issue of *Newsweek*, announced three firings and one resignation in late August. What's ironic is that the actions arose from the failure of the public TV series *Free to Choose*—the lionization of Milton Friedman and laissez-faire economics produced by Chitester's station—to turn a profit.

Flight of the moneybags

One barometer of political change around the world is the rate at which rich folk send their huddled assets to the land of liberty (*In These Times*, July 15 and Sept. 2). As French election time rolled around last May, the country's upper crust was busy investing in U.S. real estate and tangible property; fear of a Socialist sweep even led some to cart out suitcases of francs when they couldn't find investments fast enough. New York diamond dealers sought help from Berlitz.

Now diamond dealers in California suggest that another country may be about to move sharply to the left. The country is Mexico. "Wealthy Mexicans are pouring money into this state all of a sudden, trying to buy hard assets like diamonds and land," one Los Angeles diamond dealer told Dave Lindorff. "They are all saying they're afraid of a change in government." Evidently there are premonitions of widespread discontent as centrist Jose Lopez Portillo, who is not allowed to succeed himself, nears the end of his tenure as Mexico's president—leaving in his wake an estimated 10 million citizens unemployed or underemployed.

Cost-ineffectiveness

Critics of the bigger-is-better school of military spending, already armed with figures showing that a few expensive weapons offer much less defense than a larger number of basic ones (*In These Times*, March 11), may draw further ammunition from these figures, supplied by *The Washington Monthly*.

- Twenty-five years ago (1956, a peace-time year) the Air Force had 24,572 airplanes. Today it has 7,034.
- Twenty-five years ago there were 1,913 bombers capable of long-range delivery of nuclear weapons. Today there are 412.
- Fully 75 percent of today's Air Force airplanes are more than nine years old. This situation will continue to deteriorate even under Reagan, because most of the big bucks are going toward just a few more of the most expensive, complicated planes, which have plenty of expensive, complicated problems.

—Josh Kornbluth



The con artist (far right) as a young man

Will Nixon return to scene of his very first break-in?

DURHAM, NC—The seesaw battle over whether to locate a Richard M. Nixon Presidential Library adjacent to the Duke University Law School—from which the former chief executive graduated in 1937—is turning out to be a closer contest than the 1960 election.

On Aug. 31, at an extraordinary "committee of the whole" meeting of Duke's Academic Council (the faculty senate), 25 of 30 speakers opposed the library. Three days later the council voted 35 to 34 to urge the university's board of trustees to break off all negotiations with Nixon and his representatives. But on Sept. 4, members of the executive committee of the board, after walking past 30 alumni and students demonstrating against the library, voted 9 to 2 to continue the discussions. Faculty opponents of the library have now called for a special meeting of the Academic Council for a larger vote against the proposal, which they hope to carry to a full meeting of the board of trustees by the end of the month—by which time they also expect to have the backing of the just-returning student body.

The library controversy is only the latest chapter in an already rocky relationship between the former president and the university, which began with Nixon's arrival on the campus as a scholarship student in 1934. His first recorded break-in took place here, when he and another law student climbed into a professor's office after hours to get a look at their test grades.

In 1954, an offer to then-Vice President Nixon of an honorary doctor of laws degree and an invitation to speak at commencement had to be withdrawn following a heated, late-night meeting of the faculty, which voted to rescind it by a vote of 61 to 42.

Years later, when President Nixon's tax returns revealed a \$500 contribution to Duke, the student-run *Duke Chronicle*, in an editorial entitled "Shove it," raised the possibility that the money might really be "misused campaign funds" and urged Duke to return the contribution. "We don't think Duke should lower its ethical standards to accept Nixon's dirty money."

During the Watergate era, the first winner of the new Richard M. Nixon scholarship at the law school turned out to be a vocal critic of the president, and an oil

portrait donated by the president had to be taken down following threats of vandalism and a brief "kidnapping."

This past summer, in a letter to university president Terry Sanford, who backs the library proposal, English professor Edwin H. Cady admitted that "for many years, Mr. Nixon has been to some nice folks what they had instead of the Prince of Darkness." Still, Cady wrote, the Nixon papers amounted to "a documentary treasure of inestimable value." More than 65,000 copies of Cady's letter were mailed out to Duke alumni and students—who were still gone for the summer—when faculty opposition to the library stalled Sanford's plan to nail down the library in mid-August.

Another faculty letter to Sanford on the same subject, this one signed by 14 senior faculty members, was not similarly reproduced and distributed. This letter voiced concern "at the consequences for our university of its name becoming inextricably tied—in perpetuity—to our country's only President forced to resign in disgrace."

Lawrence Goodwyn, author of *Democratic Promise: The Populist Moment in America* and a founder of the Ad Hoc Committee of Concerned Faculty on the Nixon Library Proposal, was especially bothered by the hurried and almost secret manner in which the negotiations were being handled. "The essence of a great university is a great faculty, and the essence of a great faculty is its morale and its participation in decisions that affect its welfare," the associate professor of history said.

—Mark I. Pinsky (Duke '69)

The West Bank sees no change

JERUSALEM—Israeli Defense Minister Ariel Sharon's much-ballyhooed resolve to walk more softly in the occupied territories is a bust, according to a newly elected Arab member of parliament (MP) from the Labor-aligned Mapam Party.

When the Sharon plan for fewer roadblocks, an end to army invasions of schools and generally more polite treatment was announced in August, the MP, Mohammed Wadat, heralded it on television as a potential breakthrough in rela-

tions and called on the government to follow through and offer West Bank and Gaza Palestinians complete autonomy. His calculated enthusiasm served to embarrass further Premier Menachem Begin's close associates, represented on the same television show by former ambassador to Egypt Eliahu Ben-Elissar, who squirmed while trying to stress that there was no change in policy. After all, Begin had been acting defense minister since Ezer Weizman quit early last year, and the logical implication of Sharon's pronouncements was that there had been unnecessarily harsh oppression.

Then early this month the really quite predictable defense establishment came through with an act that Wadat could decry as contradicting Sharon's proclamations: 77 West Bank youths were rounded up and arrested at 1 a.m. in Nazareth, provoking an ugly little confrontation. Together with several thousand Israeli Arabs and leftist Jews, the youths had been painting schools and paving roads in a voluntary work camp held by the Communist-run municipality of Israel's largest Arab city.

The Palestinians were arrested because occupation rules make it illegal for a resident of the territories to remain overnight in Israel proper without a special permit. But why, Wadat pointedly asked in an open letter to Sharon, did the army crack down only on this "constructive project of solidarity," and not on the thousands of Palestinian workers kept overnight, often locked inside factories in sub-human conditions, by their Israeli bosses in Tel-Aviv and elsewhere?

Meanwhile, with Begin and Egyptian President Sadat declaring the on-again, off-again autonomy negotiations to be on again, Sharon began a round of meetings with several of the more conservative mayors and other leaders in the territories. But even they told him, it was widely reported, that the address for any negotiations is the PLO, and that the subject must be not even slightly less limited autonomy than what has been proposed so far, but a process leading toward full self-determination.

And back in Galilee, the Nazareth work camp episode added impetus to another looming confrontation between the national government and local government leaders in Arab towns and villages in Israel, where residents are considering militant protests against the discrimination in state finances and services they face compared with Jewish settlements of comparable size.

—David Mandel

IN THE NATION

HEALTH AND SAFETY

There is life after Auchter—at least in Philadelphia

By Robert Howard

ON JUNE 18, 1981, THORNE Auchter, director of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, met briefly with the executive board of the Philadelphia Area Project on Occupational Safety and Health (PHILAPOSH).

At first, the assistant secretary's tone was reassuring. Organized labor's fears about the Reagan administration's plans for OSHA were "absolutely unfounded," he said. Then, after a pause, Auchter came to the real subject of this special meeting—the upcoming decision about the continuation of PHILAPOSH's \$119,000 New Directions OSHA grant.

"From a factual standpoint," said Auchter, "you guys have an uphill battle. You come poorly recommended through the Reagan administration and through the Republicans, the people I normally do business with. You've created a lot of stir through some of the activist actions I understand you've taken....I've had a number of people whispering in my ear about what a bunch of bad actors you all are."

Auchter's threat was unspoken but perfectly clear—to recommend against the renewal of PHILAPOSH's New Directions grant. Nearly half of the 20 non-profit "committees on occupational safety and health"—or COSH groups—nationwide receive federal money through

the end of September, when three of the oldest and most effective COSH groups—PHILAPOSH, the Chicago Area Coalition on Occupational Safety and Health (CACOSH) and Silicon Valley's Project on Health and Safety in Electronics (PHASE)—will learn the government's decision on their renewal requests.

But the fate of the COSH groups' New Directions funding is just one element in a larger picture. The nearly 10-year-old COSH movement is at a crossroads. Groups like PHILAPOSH have taken root in cities and states across the coun-

the severity of violations is worse than in any other industry except mining.

During the last two years, a number of refineries in the region have been fined thousands of dollars for deliberately withholding medical information from workers, their unions and OSHA, indicating that employees were suffering from asbestos-related lung disease. In July 1980, the New Castle, Delaware, facility of the Amoco Chemical Corporation was fined \$20,000 for failing to notify one worker of his asbestos-related disease and refusing to transfer him to an activity that might have prevented his condition from getting worse. The administrative law judge who heard the case ruled that Amoco's conduct "amounted to a defiant and reckless disregard for the provisions of the OSHA Act." Last October, a massive explosion destroyed the New

at the Philadelphia zoo.

Like other COSH groups, PHILAPOSH's goal is to provide unions with technical information and training in order to develop worker awareness and expertise on health and safety issues. A "health/technical committee," consisting of volunteer physicians, industrial hygienists, lawyers and even the current director of the New Jersey state occupational safety and health program, answers workers' questions and organizes training sessions. But perhaps the greatest lesson that PHILAPOSH teaches workers is how health and safety regulation in America really works.

Three years ago, when Moose Morris first learned that a fellow worker at the Dupont refinery in Salem County, New Jersey had asbestosis, he wasn't even sure what the word meant. But as a member

Access to the United Way check-off is a windfall for PHILAPOSH.



Bill Kane of the UAW released a canister of unidentified gas at a city council meeting to make his point about the "right to know."

of the health and safety committee of the independent Chemical Workers' Association at Dupont, Morris felt that he ought to find out. He attended a PHILAPOSH educational session on asbestos-related disease and began to get interested. He and other union officials poured over Dupont's "Form 200" records in which incidents of occupational injury and illness are reported to OSHA. They found no mention of asbestosis whatsoever until, in 1979, the name of the worker who had been diagnosed by his family doctor as having the disease showed up—with the date of illness listed as 1972.

At that point, says Morris, "we started getting really involved." The local invited PHILAPOSH staff members to organize training sessions on asbestos for its members. The health/technical committee put the association in touch with NIOSH which sent a doctor to examine company medical files. The government doctor discovered that of some 127 employees whose records were checked, a full 116 had been found by company doctors to have indications of asbestosis or other asbestos-related diseases. Dupont had never bothered to inform them of their illness.

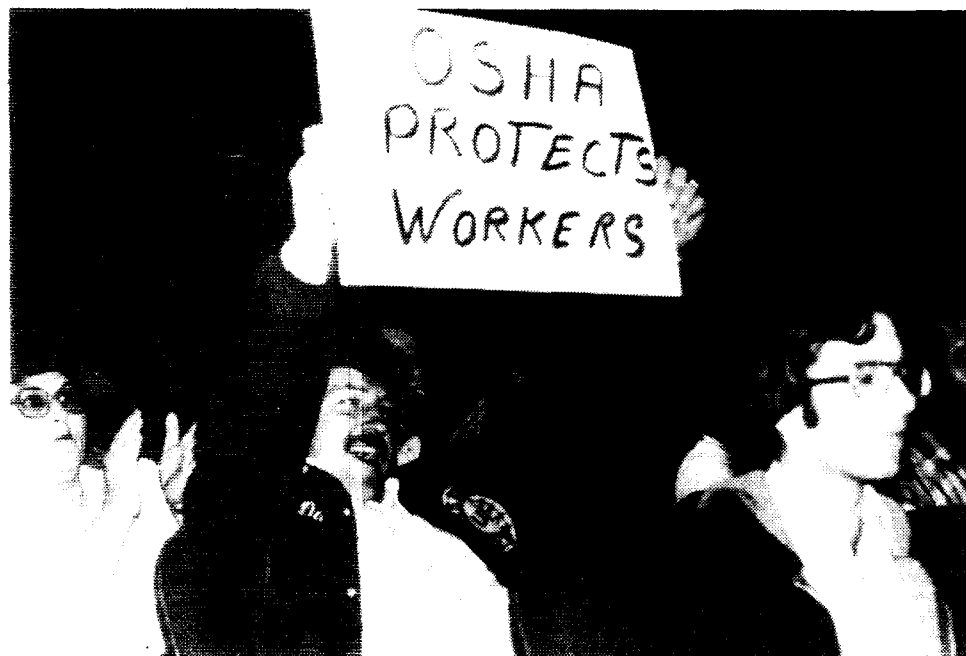
Morris calls Dupont's cover-up a "silent conspiracy." With the help of PHILAPOSH, Morris has been able to uncover the facts. Unfortunately, Dupont's cover-up has recently been given tacit support by Thorne Auchter's OSHA. In a "stipulated settlement" last March, agency and company lawyers agreed to reduce Dupont's fine for concealing the medical information from \$18,000 to \$3,000. (The Chemical Workers Association has spent far more on legal fees alone.)

Dupont's actions provide a lesson in the politics of health and safety. "Just having the knowledge isn't enough," explains Charlie Richardson, a worker at a local shipyard and chairman of the PHILAPOSH political action committee. "You can confront the companies with all the knowledge you want, but that's not what turns them around. After you get the knowledge, you have to do something with it." For this reason, perhaps the most important aspect of PHILAPOSH's work has been its efforts to build political coalitions around health and safety issues. The most striking success to date has been the organization's leading role in the "right-to-know" victory at the Philadelphia city council.

Knowledge in one city.

As early as 1976 PHILAPOSH and other COSH groups had been active in lobbying for an OSHA standard requiring the labelling of all toxic substances

Continued on page 8



A series of public demonstrations kept health and safety in the news in Philadelphia.

the innovative OSHA program for grassroots health and safety education developed under Eula Bingham. Funding requests for fiscal year 1982 are currently under review.

So far, only one COSH group—New Jersey's NJCOSH—has seen its application rejected outright. But OSHA officials have made it clear that future government support depends on cleaving to a new political orthodoxy. "We were told that the administration was going to look at the image of the COSH groups—and in all their work, not just the OSHA-funded part," said Zoe Clayson of Mary-COSH, which received \$60,000 of a requested \$130,000. "In effect, we were told, 'if you want to get refunded, you had better keep a low profile.'"

Just how far Auchter will go in enforcing the new orthodoxy will be apparent at

try. Now, they are struggling for financial self-sufficiency and searching for ways to go on the offensive in an era of weak federal enforcement and all-out corporate attack on worker health and safety. But the story of PHILAPOSH suggests that the COSH movement enters this battle with remarkable resiliency and strength.

Danger valley.

The oil and chemical refineries lining the banks of the Delaware River along the 40 miles between Philadelphia and Wilmington are one of the most dangerous concentrations of occupational hazards in all American industry. According to a recent report by the New York-based Council on Economic Priorities, the violation rate of OSHA standards in the chemical industry is three times the national average;



Castle plant, killing five workers and injuring 29 in yet another health and safety tragedy.

The Delaware Valley industrial region has proved fertile ground for the union activists who founded PHILAPOSH in 1975. Starting from a base of locals in the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers union at refineries in the area, the organization has steadily grown to the point where it currently has a full-time staff of six and over 70 local union sponsors in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware ranging from industrial workers to teachers, welfare workers and caretakers

CONSUMER ACTIVISM

Wisconsin's CUB takes on the utilities

By Abby Feely

MADISON, WI

WISCONSIN HAS LAUNCHED a unique experiment in consumer activism that has attracted the attention of consumer groups and public utilities across the country.

The Citizen's Utility Board (CUB) was created three years ago by the Wisconsin legislature in response to citizen complaints that the state's appointed Public Service Commission consistently sided with utilities in rate cases. Its legislative mandate directs it to represent farmers and residential utility customers before regulatory bodies.

Since its 18-member board was elected last February, CUB has instigated challenges against the state's largest electrical utility, Wisconsin Electric Power Co. (WEPCO), and successfully dissuaded the PSC from permitting the state's utilities to place limited-service adaptors on customers' meters. The latter action would have allowed utilities to withhold all but a limited amount of heat and light in the winter from customers in arrears. CUB argued that the adaptors would give the utilities an unreasonable measure of control over consumers.

In its case against WEPCO, CUB's first major showdown with a utility, the infant organization persuaded the PSC to shave \$14 million from the utility's request for a \$141-million electric rate increase in 1981. Residential WEPCO customers can still expect their bills to increase by 18 percent annually. But CUB claims it won the major policy battles in the rate hearings with consequences that extend to all Wisconsin utility ratepayers.

Had WEPCO been granted its request for a 16 percent increase on its return of common stock, it would have raised the allowable profit ceiling for state utilities. WEPCO also argued that its residential

customers should bear the brunt of its over-all increase by paying rates almost 50 percent higher than those assessed businesses. Instead, as a result of CUB's lobbying and other evidence, the PSC granted WEPCO only a 14.5 percent return on equity—still within precedent—and imposed slightly higher rates on its industrial and commercial users. CUB successfully refuted claims by the utility and by General Motors as an intervenor that residential users were subsidized by business utility rates.

Needless to say, such actions have not endeared CUB to the utility lobby. William Upham, president of Wisconsin utility Investors, Inc., has expressed concern that CUB is more interested in "power aggrandizement" than consumers.

But CUB's public information director, Andrew Sharpless, prefers to characterize his organization as "the first authentic grass-roots consumer union at the state level."

Support for the CUB concept during an intense, four-year lobbying effort came from labor, senior citizen and consumer groups organized as the "Coalition for CUB." Its present membership of 48,000 continues to represent the diverse interests of utility consumers.

CUB's board of directors range from perennial politicians of conservative persuasion to one of the state's most effective environmental lobbyists, Peter Anderson of Wisconsin's Environmental Decade. The United Auto Workers, the Wisconsin Education Association and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees each contributed \$10,000 in seed money to help CUB through its infancy, and several current board members have labor backgrounds. Two representatives to the board are elected from each of the state's congressional districts.

CUB's staff and lobbying expenses are supported by \$3 membership fees and small donations that the legislature has permitted it to solicit through a limited



Steve Kogan

A CUB challenge helped to shave \$14 million from a rate increase requested by the state's largest electric utility.

number of enclosures in utility bill mailings. CUB executive director, Sharon Chamberlain, says that the legislature's decision to let CUB communicate with potential members through mail inserts has greatly increased its ability to reach Wisconsin households and made it more "directly accountable" to its members than the traditional consumer alternative, a people's council.

She estimates that since CUB's latest mailing—which attacked AT&T's proposal for local-measured rate service—went out with Wisconsin Phone Co. bills, membership has increased 100 to 200 persons a day. "By year's end we hope to have 70,000 members and a budget of \$250,000," she says.

Utilities did not accept such inserts

without a fight. CUB's selection of Wisconsin Power and Light for its initial mailing prompted the utility to challenge the legislature's right to mandate such enclosures, but the U.S. Post Office ruled that the mailing was proper.

One glance at CUB's brochure and it's easy to see why the utility balked. The flier asks consumers such questions as "Do you have a voice at the legislature to speak out against utility lobbyists?" and "Do you think you can do anything if utilities waste your money or operate inefficiently?"

If consumers answer "No" to CUB's queries, they are encouraged to "Join the Citizens Utility Board."

CUB's other priorities, after the rate cases, are opposition to the state's automatic fuel adjustment clause, and reform of the state's method of selecting public service commissioners.

The fuel adjustment clause permits electrical utilities automatically to charge consumers each month for increases in fuel costs. Last year, CUB estimates, these charges totaled \$90 million.

CUB claims the "fuel adjustment" is a disguised surcharge and argues that utilities will make little effort to locate the most economical energy sources so long as they are permitted to pass on any unanticipated additional costs to their customers. Currently, utilities may include the costs of shipping, insurance, labor and other items in their calculations of the price of "fuel."

As CUB board member and treasurer Rob Kennedy, representing the 2nd Congressional District, which includes Madison, explains it, the third priority—selection of PSC members—is somewhat ironic.

"It was Gov. [Lee S.] Dreyfus' support for an elected PSC during his campaign that prompted utilities to withdraw their opposition to CUB, which they perceived to be the lesser of two evils," Kennedy notes.

Dreyfus, who reluctantly assisted in CUB's inception, has since been able to replace the PSC's three Democratic appointees with his own Republican nominees.

Kennedy observes that the incidence of PSC rate cases decided in the utilities' favor has increased from 50 to 88 percent under the Dreyfus administration, while, in one recent instance, "the commission actually granted WP&L more than the 14 percent residential rate increase it requested."

CUB's legislative agenda for the coming session also includes support for a bill that would permit municipalities to establish solar access rights; support for conservation rate structures and maintenance of affordable flat-rate phone service; opposition to immediate or accelerated decontrol of natural gas; and a request for a Wisconsin Legislative Council study examining utility taxation.

As the first publicly mandated consumers' cooperative in the nation, CUB's actions are being closely monitored by other states. In fact, similar legislation has now been introduced in Illinois, Arkansas, California, Florida, Oregon and New York.

Abby Feely is a public relations specialist with the Dane County (Wisc.) Regional Planning Commission.

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IN THE WORLD

By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

ONE BASIC QUESTION PROPELS the stream of journalists converging from all over the world on the heavily guarded house in Auvers-sur Oise, 20 miles north of Paris, to interview deposed Iranian president Abolhassan Bani Sadr. Is this an update of the Ayatollah Khomeini's exile headquarters at Neauphle-le-Chateau? Is the next Iranian revolution, like the last, being hatched in an obscure middle-class suburb of the French capital?

Only time can tell, but the time, according to Bani Sadr himself, is short. In the long run, economic stagnation and executions of leftists favor the right. But in the short run, the first elected president of the Islamic Republic thinks there is still a chance for the left to bring down the dictatorship of the mullahs and get the revolution back on its course of democracy and national independence.

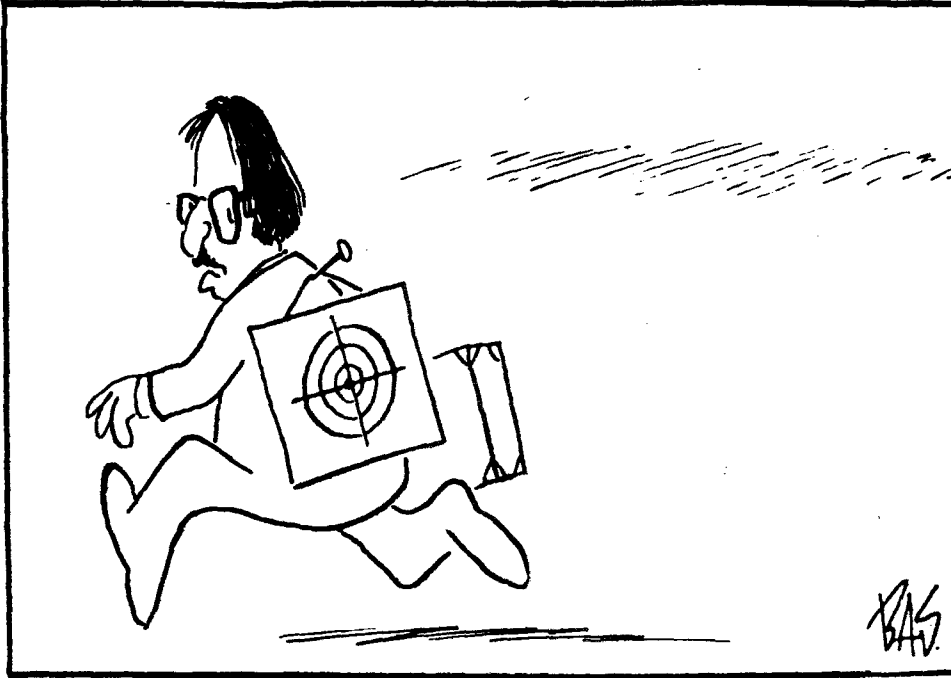
Bani Sadr fled to France July 29 with Massoud Rajavi, leader of the Mujahidin Khalk leftist Islamic guerrilla organization that hid him when he was thrown out of office in June. For the next couple of weeks, as the French government moved rapidly and discreetly to evacuate French citizens from Iran and spare Mitterrand any possibility of the Carter hostages nightmare, Bani Sadr was put under virtual house arrest and gagged with unprecedented strictness by French police.

The shah's last prime minister, Shapur Bakhtiar, and other right-wing exiles who have clustered in Paris took advantage of Bani Sadr's enforced silence to issue a flood of statements accusing him of responsibility for the Khomeini regime's oppression and other faults. For a while it looked as if the French government might be contributing to the political destruction of Bani Sadr by shutting him up while allowing his enemies to talk. But on Aug. 14 the French Socialist Party issued a statement highly favorable to the deposed president. Noting that "political and religious intolerance of the mullahs have largely disappointed the aspirations to freedom and justice for which the Iranian people have been struggling for so many years," the SP added that "this situation cannot in any case justify the defenders of the imperial regime, which bears much of the responsibility for this unfortunate turn of events."

This statement amounted to implicit endorsement of the position taken by Bani Sadr as true representative of a revolution betrayed. Bani Sadr's central idea is that national independence and political freedoms go together, because a tyranny ruling over a sheeplike, passive people inevitably becomes dependent on foreign powers.

In his statement, Bani Sadr wrote that "it was always clear to me that the revolutionary tribunals would finally turn into institutions of inquisition and butchery of thought. That is why from the very start I spoke out against these tribunals and their methods and said it was absolutely necessary to judge the main agents of the shah's regime before regular courts both to respect human dignity and the rule of law, and so that the current generation could learn through public trials the whole truth on the old regime, in particular concerning total U.S. control of the destiny of our country." Other principles voiced in Paris but abandoned by Khomeini in Iran included equal opportunity for women, organization of the country through democratic councils and transformation of the economy towards independent development. By sticking up for these principles—which he helped draft—Bani Sadr became an opposition leader even while he was president.

Judging by the French security measures around the Auvers house, Bani Sadr—or Moussad Rajavi, in both of



IRAN

Bani Sadr mourns derailed revolution

them—must be, if not more dangerous, certainly more endangered than Khomeini ever was. When the Ayatollah was living in Neauphle, a few French policemen were posted in the road nearby. Today in Auvers armed soldiers with walkie-talkies stop visitors at a road block until an armed escort arrives to march them some 50 yards to the body check point, where visitors must surrender their passports. Inside the garden strollers are all armed with automatic weapons, and troops patrol the whole neighborhood as well as nearby woods.

Reconstructing the dictatorship.

The deposed president seems casual, even fatalistic, as he takes on wave after wave of interviewers, sustained by an occasional small cup of strong tea. Bani Sadr stressed his opposition to "the reconstruction of the dictatorship." "It's not like the time of the shah, it's even worse," he said. "Most of the Savak agents were rehired. [An estimated 80 percent of old Savak agents work for Khomeini's new secret police, the Sarami.] The same files are still there. The same methods are there. Before, there were at least certain formalities, now there's nothing, just simple killing."

Bani Sadr is convinced that the American embassy hostages crisis was instigated by American agents and manipulated in order to sabotage the revolution. "I can't point to any specific CIA agent among the Islamic students or Khomeini's entourage. But there are many signs showing that the whole process couldn't have developed as it did without complicity. Who took the shah to the United States? The reaction had been predicted. At first, the students who occupied the embassy meant to stay for four or five days and then leave. But no, they changed their minds and stayed. Why? Because Khomeini said the hostages would not be released unless the shah was expelled from the U.S. or turned over to us. That way, we hoped the expulsion of the shah could settle the matter. But no, someone went to Khomeini and told him to insist that the Americans give us the shah. All at once he changed and said the Americans must give us the shah. Of course that was inconceivable. The hostage crisis was used to reconstruct the dictatorship."

"Every time we tried to publish anything concerning the past, showing American policy in Iran, they prevented us. We prepared the case against the shah to send to Panama to demand his extradition. The deal involved transferring the hostages to the government. But

at the last minute, at Khomeini's orders, the hostages remained in the students' hands, so the legal proceedings in Panama could not take place... There were many occasions like that..."

The army in the wings.

In other interviews, Bani Sadr has said that his wife saw through Khomeini long before he did and warned him that the old man was a liar. I asked him for examples showing that Khomeini lied rather than merely changed his mind.

"If first he said one thing he didn't believe and then the opposite, it isn't a matter of changing his mind, but of lying. You've only to read what he said when he was in Paris and look at the present situation. The contradiction is flagrant. Sometimes he has changed his mind, but in other cases it's simply because he has always imagined that poli-

An estimated 80 percent of the old Savak agents have been rehired by Khomeini's new secret police, the Sarami.

tics is opportunism. Because he has neither political experience nor knowledge of politics, economics, of what is essential for guiding a country like Iran in this world. His lies? For instance, he took the hostages essentially to settle domestic political scores. He told me so. But what did he tell the world? The contrary."

Because of the hostages, the economic blockade, war with Iraq, one crisis after another, "everything has stayed the same." The structures that seemed lost in the revolution have been salvaged. These are the structures that support political oppression and economic dependence. "Today, the body is still there, it's the head that's missing. In place of the head, there are mullahs who can't do anything. Once Khomeini is dead, they'll be replaced by competent people who'll make the structure run." So long as the structures are there, calling for a head, the right will be in power in one form or another."

I noted that of the essential structures,

the army has been on the sidelines politically, involved in war with Iraq that has given it new popularity. Couldn't both the war with Iraq and the army's rehabilitation through that war fit in with somebody's long-range restoration plans? "To an outside observer," I said, "it looks as if the army is waiting while two forces, the left and the mullahs, slaughter each other. When both are weakened, the army will come back and take over."

"That's true," he replied. But he insisted that the war has changed the army's mentality. "It used to be hated as an instrument of a foreign power, but since defending the nation it has recovered its dignity. It is now well-liked by the people, and it is exactly its popularity that prevents it from acting as the Americans expect."

I remember that well before Iraq attacked Iran, Iranians in Paris describing themselves as partisans of Bani Sadr were predicting that Iraq would be encouraged to attack Iran precisely in order to prepare the Iranian armed forces for a victorious comeback and eventual seizure of power with American backing. Bani Sadr's countermove was to embrace the army as its commander-in-chief. He prides himself on having helped bring the army and people together.

His wooing of the armed forces was successful enough to get him safely out of the country, but didn't stop Khomeini from firing him as commander-in-chief. In another recent interview he said he was against a military uprising. "The royalists only talk about the role of the army," he told *Le Monde*. "It's the people who should take their fate into their own hands." But how? This remains unclear after a visit to the Auvers residence.

In the past few months, the top ranks of the mullocracy have been thinned with a deadly accuracy unique in the history of political assassination. On June 28, a bomb exploded in Islamic Republican Party headquarters in Tehran killing 74 party leaders including its president and strong man Mohamed Beheshti. The day before, Tehran's influential Friday preacher, Sayed Ali Khamenei, was severely wounded in an attack, and the day after, the director of Evin prison, Mohamed Kachui, was assassinated. On Aug. 30, the new president of the republic, Mohammed Ali Rajai, and prime minister Mohammed Javad Bahonar were killed in a bomb blast in their supposedly heavily guarded office.

Apparently unable to defend themselves effectively, the mullah leaders blame the Mujahidin "hypocrites" and speed up arrests and executions of leftists. At Auvers, Moussad Rajavi claims to be uninformed as to whether his organization committed the assassinations. (The London Majahidin first claimed the Aug. 30 bombing and then retracted.) As for Bani Sadr, he "condemns" terrorist attacks but finds it "understandable" that those responsible for savage oppression are assassinated. A few days before Rajai and Bahonar were killed, Bani Sadr told the *New York Times* that they were two of five men whose deaths would cause the regime's collapse. He also told the *Washington Post* that he had refused "somebody's" ("not only the Mujahidin, others as well") request for authorization to assassinate Khomeini because of the risk of civil war.

Plotting for restoration.

In the luxury apartments on Paris' west side, restorationists from Princess Ashraf to Shapur Bakhtiar are hatching more gilded plots to go in for the kill. Rajavi, like Bani Sadr, considers that the rightists have no chance in the short run of taking power, but that their chances will improve as time goes on and chaos deepens.

Rajavi and Bani Sadr have agreed to disagree politically on some things, but are united in the National Resistance Council against the mullah dictatorship.

Continued on page 8

Iran

Continued from the previous page

They insist they want a pluralistic republic in which neither the Mujahidin nor any other single group would monopolize power. Rajavi says that despite differences, the Mujahidin felt it was their duty to protect a man who lost the presidency and risked his life by his courageous stand against Khomeini's crimes.

The Mujahidin is the only leftist group allied with Bani Sadr. They have in common an effort to synthesize Islamic ideals and modern social and economic analysis. But Bani Sadr explicitly rejects class struggle for an ideal of social unity.

"The essential factor in the Iranian revolution," he maintains, "was the absence of any possibility for people to be productive. Economic opportunities were closed. Political ideas were dangerous. Economically, the cycle of exchanging oil exports for imported foreign goods cut off any productive opportunities. We were reduced to distributing and consuming goods produced by others. And the oil revenues bought goods that could satisfy only a tiny minority of the people. We were condemned to total passivity. The people made the revolution to get out of that impasse. But Khomeini didn't understand what the people needed. So he encouraged their hostility, which is unfortunately just what the shah did. Now he's back in the same impasse. He hasn't succeeded in doing anything. Neither he nor the right have any chance of getting us out of that impasse."

But, I observed, the problem of unproductivity is planet-wide, with no solution in sight, and an impasse can be lasting. Do you think time is working for you or against you?

"The long term is against us. Because, indeed, one can't say that just because there is an impasse we'll end up by changing things as we'd want. It happens that an impasse produces an explosion that destroys everyone. I am very much afraid

of that."

The Marxist left groups—Fedayin, Peykar, Komaleh—do not join the Mujahidin in allying with Bani Sadr. But none of those groups, whose base tends to be largely limited to the young intelligentsia, is as strong and popular as the Mujahidin. The Mujahidin plus Bani Sadr seem to add up to a sort of Islamic center left, which in Iran may be a point on the political compass that corresponds to a real social base.

According to author Shapur Haghi-ghat, Bani Sadr's "disgrace was the result of a much more deep and sustained

social conflict than appears on the surface. The concentration of certain categories of the liberal bourgeoisie and the bazaar [merchants] who were searching in vain for a chance to break with the regime." Bani Sadr provides a more "comfortable" alternative to Khomeini than the defenders of the fallen monarchy.

The liberal bourgeoisie and the bazaar were a main force behind the scenes in the revolution that overthrew the shah and the international parasite bourgeoisie around him. But the liberal bourgeoisie has been pushed into opposition by the confusion and disorder of the mul-

lahs' regime, economic stagnation, the shutdown of the universities and the threat that this government, like the last, may try to extend its control from nationalized finance and industry (formerly controlled by the international bourgeoisie close to the shah) to foreign trade, dear to the bazaar. Thus the liberal bourgeoisie may succeed in regaining national leadership by championing freedom and democracy and channeling various grievances towards a moderate solution. Neither the left nor the monarchists have enough popular strength to win.



COSH groups such as PHILAPOSH played a key role in defeating S.2153, the "gut-OSHA" bill introduced last year by Sen. Richard S. Schweiker.

Health and safety

Continued from page 5

ference on toxic substances gave birth to the Delaware Valley Toxic Coalition, an alliance of labor, environmental and community groups. Over the next year, the coalition formulated two amendments to the city's fire and air pollution codes requiring that companies notify the city of all toxic substances used in their plants. The amendments were introduced in the city council in June 1980.

The business community, with the chemical industry at its head, bitterly opposed the bill, using the tried-and-true argument that it would cost the city jobs. "Everybody was saying to us, 'you're going to close this city down. They'll all move out,'" remembers Bill Kane, a PHILAPOSH board member from the United Auto Workers. Philadelphia Mayor William Green took industry's side and introduced an alterna-

tive bill that the toxic coalition labelled the "right-to-know-nothing" bill.

The coalition countered by packing city council meetings with hundreds of supporters and linking the right-to-know campaign to the serious concerns about environmental health of citizens in Philadelphia's industrial neighborhoods. "The media were full of it for months," says PHILAPOSH's Jim Moran. "Because we had to fight so hard, people were really mobilized."

Finally, the coalition forced a compromise, and on Jan. 22, 1981, the city council unanimously passed a right-to-know bill containing the major provisions of the original proposal. The very same week, OSHA director Auchter indefinitely postponed the federal labeling standard promulgated in the last days of the Carter administration—making Philadelphia, along with the five states that have also passed right-to-know legislation, the only places in the country where workers have a legal right to information about the potentially dangerous substances they work with.

The struggle over right-to-know is a good example of what Bill Kane calls "the void the COSH groups are filling." PHILAPOSH has proved itself an effective organizer of broad political coalitions—a place where different unions meet and work together and where the labor movement as a whole can form alliances with other social groups. "The unions," Kane believes, have "missed the boat on the political education. They're not making the worker aware of why things are the way they are. It's the COSH groups that are zeroing in on that."

IN THESE TIMES

MEDICAL INVESTIGATIVE FUND

\$190 Billion

That's the annual health care bill in the United States. Yet despite this massive expenditure:

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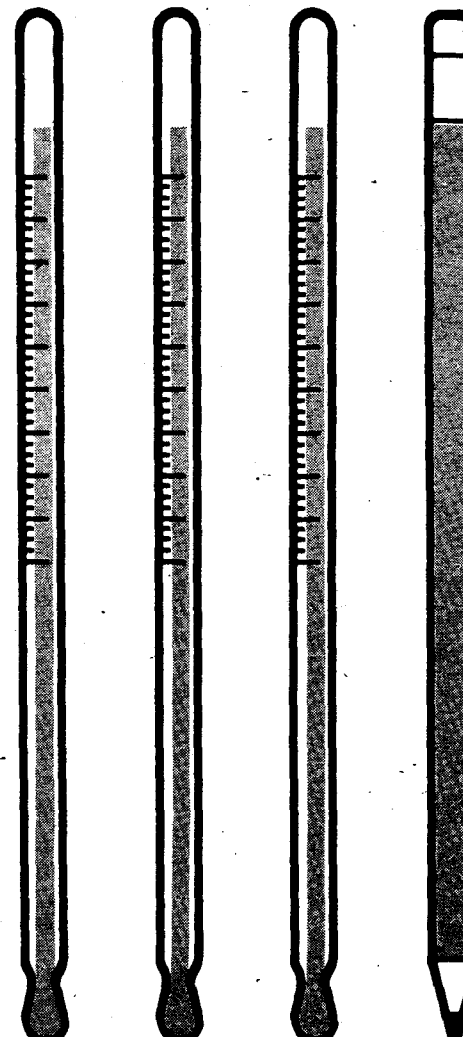
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An unlikely gold mine.

Of course it is precisely this kind of political education and activism that the Reagan administration is trying to quash. So, in addition to marshalling congressional support for the renewal of its New Directions grant (Pennsylvania's two Republican senators have written Auchter in support of the grant), PHILAPOSH is searching for ways to become financially independent.

Seventy-five percent of the organization's fiscal year 1981 budget of \$159,000 came from its New Directions grant. Only 5 percent, a little over \$8,000, came from the dues of sponsoring locals. "No COSH group receives significant funding from unions," says PHILAPOSH associate director Rick Engler. "But if they aren't eventually funded by unions and rank-and-file workers, they're just not going to make it."

Some COSH groups are finding other ways to increase funds. New York City's NYCOSH, for example, made \$14,000 last year—nearly half their yearly budget—from sales of its pamphlet on the health hazards of VDTs. And in Philadelphia, PHILAPOSH has discovered a way to exploit the same funding mechanism long used by corporations to improve their public relations—the weekly check-off system of the United Way.

According to Rick Engler, it was "an enormous piece of luck." In 1980, a group of women's charitable organizations known as Women's Way asked to join the Philadelphia United Way. Upon hearing the news, the Catholic Federation of Charities, already a member, threatened to pull out in protest over the pro-abortion stand of Women's Way.

That conflict put the United Way in an embarrassing bind: no matter which side it chose, the result would be bad publicity and probably lowered revenues. So the United Way decided not to choose at all. Instead, they developed a compromise

Continued on page 18

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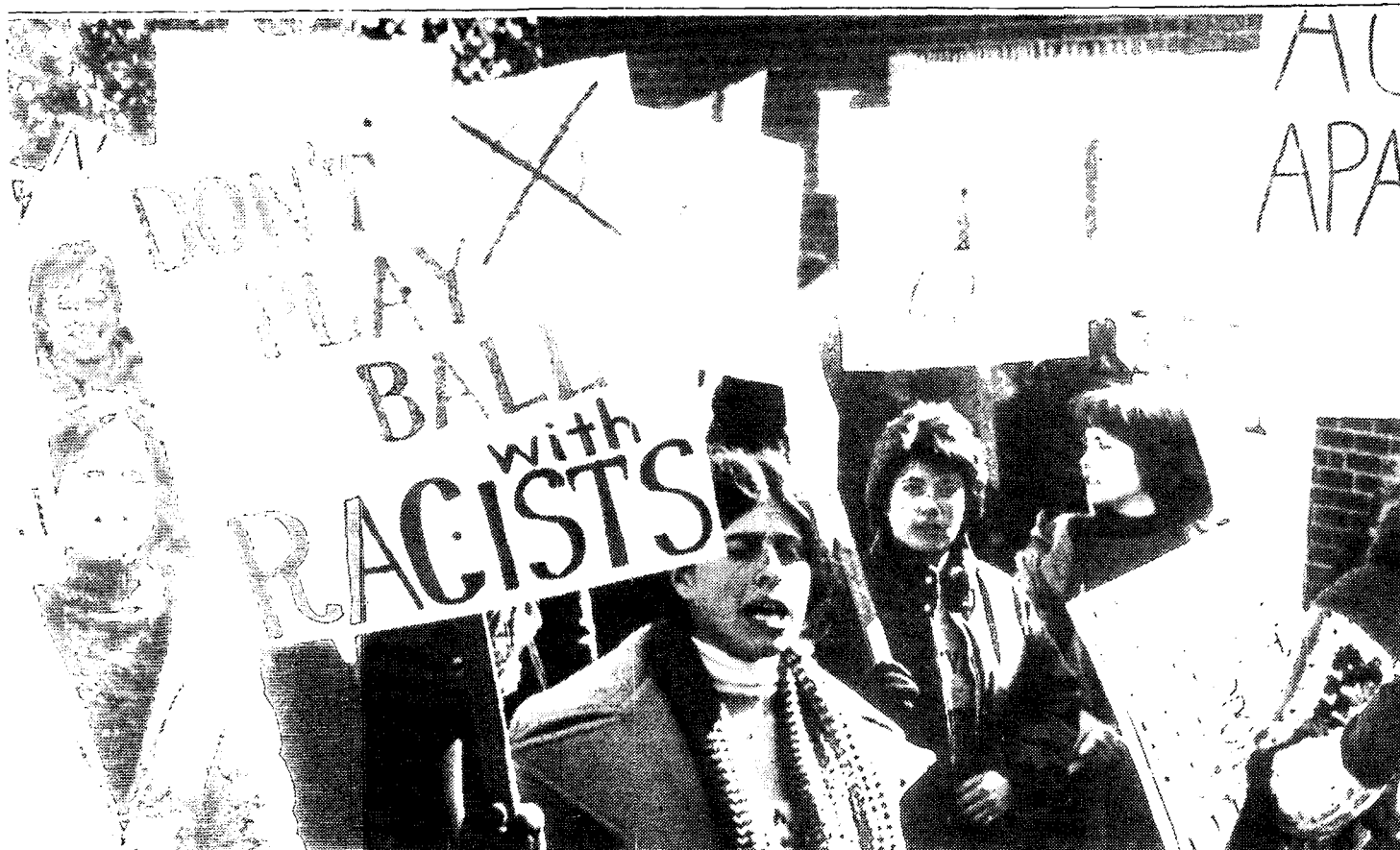
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SOUTH AFRICA



In 1977 more than 3,000 marchers protested South African participation in Davis Cup competition at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. SART hopes again to mobilize the public against the Springbok tour.

It's not just any rugby tour

By Louis Freedberg

CAPE TOWN

FOR THE PAST 10 YEARS, SOUTH Africa has been the target of an effective world-wide sports boycott that has made it difficult—and in most cases impossible—for its teams to compete against athletes from other countries.

But when President Reagan gave the South African rugby team permission to play three matches in the U.S. later this month, he helped widen the cracks that have begun to appear in that boycott. He also handed the South African government a significant diplomatic victory. The team, known as the Springboks after South Africa's national animal, is scheduled to play three games here: in Chicago on Sept. 19, in Albany, N.Y. on Sept. 22 and in New York City on Sept. 26.

At the same time, the Reagan administration has wittingly or unwittingly placed itself in the middle of an international controversy that threatens to split apart the British Commonwealth and raises the spectre of a boycott of the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles.

The Springboks will arrive in the United States from New Zealand, where their matches have already generated the largest social protests in the history of that country. The second game of the New Zealand tour had to be cancelled after hundreds of demonstrators penetrated a police barrier and occupied the playing field. Police attempted to remove the demonstrators one by one, but were forced to call off the game when a man claiming to have terminal cancer threatened to crash a light plane into the stadium filled with 28,000 rugby enthusiasts. Subsequent games have been played under virtual siege.

The Springbok tour has taken place despite the 1977 Gleneagles Agreement, signed by all Commonwealth countries, including New Zealand. All countries agreed to "take every practical step to discourage competition with South African sporting organizations." New Zealand Prime Minister Robert Muldoon appealed to the New Zealand Rugby Union to call off the tour, but when it refused, Muldoon's government issued visas to the South Africans. Muldoon says he did everything in his power to prevent the tour, thereby fulfilling the terms of the Gleneagles Agreement. But the issue is not that simple, at least according to Serry Ramphal, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Secretariat. "The test we apply is not

whether New Zealand should have refused visas, but how hard she tried to implement the [Gleneagles] Agreement."

Fifteen African countries now want New Zealand banned from the Commonwealth Games to be held in Australia next year. A Commonwealth Finance Ministers Conference scheduled to be held in New Zealand this month has been cancelled.

Within South Africa itself, the tour is seen as a major victory for the ruling National Party and what is termed its "verligte" (enlightened) sports policy. Most white South Africans, particularly Afrikaners, are fanatically sports minded, especially when it comes to rugby. Because South Africa and New Zealand have long dominated the sport of rugby, the fact that a South African rugby team had not toured New Zealand for 16 years has been a particularly sore point among fans. But there can be no doubt that the sports boycotts have been successful in forcing the government to allow multi-racial sport to take place on certain levels.

Sports are now the most integrated sector of South African society. There is even a black player on the touring Springbok team. Black and white boxers have competed against one another. Some cricket clubs now admit black players, and soccer has been more or less completely integrated. At the school and university level, black and white rugby teams play together, though rugby remains the least integrated sport in the country.

All of this would have been unthinkable 10 years ago. The idea of a black athlete having physical contact with a white athlete was repugnant to many—and still is to the extremely vocal right-wing opponents of the government of Prime Minister P.W. Botha.

But some critics of the regime rightfully point out that the government's sports policies have not extended to other sectors of South African life. Whether a sport should be integrated remains the decision of individual clubs, and whether sports facilities should be used for multi-racial events is up to the local municipalities. No national laws have been changed to permit sports competition between the races. Instead, segregated sports have been allowed under a complex system of administrative edicts, special permits and exemptions granted by the relevant government departments.

The ruling National Party does not in fact encourage multi-racial sport at the local or club level. "Mixed sport at club level remains contrary to party policy," Dr. Piet Koorhof, the then-minister of sport and recreation, said in 1977.

"Sports policy should in no way threaten the identity or self-determination of the race groups."

As a result, barely a week goes by without a racial incident related to a sports event or organization. Multi-racial clubs have to apply to the government for "international permits" in order to serve liquor to mixed groups. Individual clubs frequently refuse to play against teams that include non-white athletes. Local municipalities, like the Johannesburg City Council, often turn down requests

for use of sports stadiums for multi-racial events. This year, for the first time, a so-called colored team played in the annual schools rugby competition. Up to now, only white schools had been allowed to participate, and several schools from the traditionally conservative Transvaal province withdrew from the event in protest.

In short, while multi-racial sport does occur more frequently than in the past, the basic structure of the apartheid system remains unchanged.

But organizations like New Zealand's "Halt All Racist Tours" (HART) and Stop Apartheid Rugby Tour (SART) in the U.S. are aware of the limited nature of multi-racial sport in South Africa. SART has been working to mobilize Americans against the Springboks. But their efforts have been hampered by the fact that the games in New York City and Chicago will be played in private facilities, the locations of which are being kept secret. New York Mayor Edward Koch initially gave the Springboks permission to play in Downing Stadium on Randall's Island but changed his mind after being advised by his police chief that no sports facility could be protected against demonstrators without incurring enormous expenses.

The game in Albany, N.Y., will be played in a city-owned facility, and SART spokespersons say the major demonstrations against the South Africans will be held there.

In the meantime, African members of the International Olympic Committee are threatening to boycott the 1984 Olympics if the Reagan administration does not withdraw the visas to the Springboks. That seems unlikely at this late date. But the flurry of diplomatic activity and popular protest provoked by the tour appears to confirm the editorial statement by the *Cape Times*, an anti-government newspaper in Cape Town, that, "The rugby tour is an international political event, not a series of fixtures on the sports calendar."

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THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON

19 SEPTEMBER 1981



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Richard Stromberg

This article concludes the six-part series on health care in America funded by *In These Times*' Medical Investigative Fund.

ANY THINGS NOW ABOUT to take shape in Ronald Reagan's plans for the nation's health were foreshadowed in his governorship of California. One of his more interesting efforts there was to extend his notions of entitlement (those that have shall get, those that don't are welfare chiselers) straight back to the womb. In 1974 the governor announced that pregnant women on welfare would have their payments cut, the logic being that the welfare masses huddled within their mothers were cunningly bumming a free uterine ride. I am told by a co-counsel in the litigation that promptly ensued that the state calculated the free rent, clothing and utilities contingent on womb residency and subtracted accordingly from the women's welfare payments.

The California Welfare Rights Organization brought suit against the cutback. In April 1974, the California Supreme Court declared void the welfare department ruling that (in the court's words) "purported to consider the body of the mother of the unborn child as a 'resource' of the fetus, the economic value of which 'resource' may be deducted from the assistance grant otherwise payable to the mother upon pregnancy." Instead the court ruled in favor of the state's "long-standing policy to provide aid on behalf of the unborn child," declaring that the usual welfare payments should continue, since the fetus "is entitled to be treated as any other 'person' for purposes of computing the amount of aid to be furnished." Score one for democracy in the name of fetal per-

sonhood.

In the same era, in the same state, a sort of Fuller Brush sales campaign of health attended efforts to whip the non-fetal Medicaid horde into fiscal shape. It seems that men and women in white coats, sometimes wearing stethoscopes, would knock on one's door and announce that one's Medicaid (in California called Medi-Cal) payments were either about to disappear or would continue only if one enrolled in a "prepaid health plan." Litigation would later charge fraudulent enrollment tactics in a strategy that earlier had been approved by Gov. Reagan—prepaid health plans for Medicaid patients.

The notion behind these plans—similar to privately funded health maintenance organizations (HMOs)—was that paying ahead of time rather than visit by visit ("fee-for-service") would eliminate what the Reagan administration saw as the health equivalent of welfare chiseling—alleged unnecessary visits by the poor to their doctors and alleged overuse of hospitals and clinics—in sum, the abuse of the public trust by its enemy, the public.

The first results of Gov. Reagan's fiscal zealotry came to public light in April 1974, when a Joint Legislative Audit committee reported that of \$56.5 million paid to 15 of the new health plans between 1971 and 1973, only 48 percent had been spent on health care for Medicaid patients. The rest (in the words of a *Hastings Law Journal* article on the matter) was used for "administrative costs" and "net profits to contractors and subcontractors."

In January 1975, poverty lawyers from across the state demanded to have the prepaid contracts terminated, charging that the program was "rife with abuses"—evening clinics that mysteriously weren't open in the evening, day clinics that had no doctors, and so on. In 1976 ABC aired a program, *Medicine and Money*, that included a segment on several Southern California plans. Enrollees in the plans told of desperate attempts to get emergency care from plan physicians. In one case a patient's family tried for four days to get him admitted for an emergency—after the belated admission the patient died. *De facto* deregulation was a permanent state of affairs: peer review at the clinics was conspicuous for its absence. Not so chicanery in the accounting realm: plans extracted duplicate payments from unwitting patients. And so on. Squalidness without end.

It may seem feckless to return to these bygone examples of inequity, graft and corruption. But the health information service, Health/PAC, has just delivered to my door a fat packet of materials on President Reagan's plans for the nation's health care, and reading through it should be a Proustian experience for anyone familiar with the rake's earlier progress through more limited terrain.

Having failed in the fetal compliance effort in California, Reagan has now written into the federal budget welfare



cuts for pregnant women except in the last three months of pregnancy. The idea is to prevent women on welfare from using monies delivered early in their pregnancies to get abortions—this, according to Linda McMahon, associate commissioner for the Office of Family Assistance and one of those Reagan appointees who show that women, too, can qualify as axe-wielders.

And what of the health and food needs of these women? "There are," said McMahon casually, "other programs available." She meant, among other things, food stamps and maternal and child health programs. It could be she hadn't done her homework. On April 3, the *New York Times* announced administration plans for further reductions in food stamp payments, which, as they stood, seemed scanty enough—to wit, 44 cents, on average, per meal per recipient. Or perhaps she just agreed with Senator Jesse Helms who, according to the April 3 story, believes food stamp families follow a code that "it's all right to rip off Uncle Sam because everyone is doing it."

The enemy within.

Paranoia hangs heavy about the White House and Capitol Hill. The rule in Reaganite social policy, as in foreign policy, is constant vigilance. Vigilance, for instance, against those able bodies that may lurk in handicapped disguise—as of last April Reagan planned to tighten eligibility requirements for disability payments on the premise that one out of five recipients is not too disabled to work. Vigilance, too, against lunch-time freeloaders—the children of families earning less than a certain yearly income who now get free lunches at school. (Reagan proposes that the cost of the lunches be deducted from the families' food-stamp allotment.) And of course, vigilance against the unemployed, whose present extended

benefit program, providing up to 13 weeks' additional unemployment benefits after the 26 given by most states, is another Reagan target.

Zooming straight through the underpinnings of the welfare state, such MX missiles of domestic policy will leave devastation—how much or in what form no one will know until early winter, after September's federal appropriations have been passed in Congress. But one might expect more of the maddened and impoverished to be sleeping in and walking about our city streets, more malnutrition among the children of the poor, more physical and mental disease attendant on the attrition of programs for the poor, most of which, under Carter, were pared down to the bones anyhow.

Added the piecemeal cuts described above is Reagan's announced "Medicaid cap," a proposal to cut back by over one billion dollars the amount the federal government will spend on Medicaid this fiscal year. According to the Health Policy Advisory Center, people needing preventive, primary or rehabilitative care "will suffer relatively more than others because those services are the ones most likely to be cut."

What the feds cut back will be passed on to the states, which even now are digging in against shouldering the costs. Tennessee has already proposed limiting Medicaid coverage to two emergency room visits a year; the Washington state legislature has voted to eliminate Medicaid and Medicare for the elderly and disabled with extra-heavy medical expenses. And Oregon has already dropped Medicaid coverage for families with unemployed parents.

Then there is Reagan's "block grant" proposal, which combines 40 federal health and social service programs into four block grants. The government will dispense these to the states, which will

Giving the free market a greater role in health care will only lay bare the savagery of medicine for profit.



Mel Rosenthal

then be free to decide which programs to cut, which to support. Questions posed in a *New York Times* Op Ed article last March seem appropriate here: "Considering local politics, the likelihood of few federal regulations and the competition for new block-grant funds [which will be] cut almost 40 percent, how responsible is Texas likely to be to migrants' health and bilingual education needs?...Is Kentucky likely to support black lung clinics?"

To give an idea of the sorts of programs that will come under the axe, estimates are that New York State will lose \$9 million out of an original \$35 million in maternal and child health; around \$2 million of \$8 million for mental health services; \$550,000 of \$2 million in immunization funds. And to the last figure, add the one that two out of five black children in central cities in the United States are currently not immunized against tetanus, polio, diphtheria and whooping cough.

Out of these health barrens, however,

there has sprouted the wan blossom of an idea. It is called "competition strategy," and it purports to breathe new life into the nation's health by making medicine even more an affair of the marketplace than it already is. The father "competition strategy," one Alain Enthoven, a Stanford University professor, last January wrote an article for *The New England Journal of Medicine* that described the idea. The prose is dense with phrases like "fixed-dollar subsidy," "competing economic units" and "minimum benefit packages." But the golden core of the article is Enthoven's proclamation of "universal coverage in the context of a competitive system."

The Enthoven plan surfaced last June as a draft bill by Richard ("Dick") Gephardt (R-Mo.), and none other than David Stockman. It came to me together with a cover letter that announced that "market incentives and market disciplines would replace government regulation of the business aspects of health care delivery." In addition the bill would give "health care providers the freedom to compete in terms of price and quantity."

Such announcement should warm the hearts of rugged free-enterprise individualists. But as such things usually fall out, enterprise according to the Gephardt-Stockman gospel turns out not to be all that free. For example, their bill requires federal guarantees that the insurers will meet certain minimal standards of financial "viability." But since the most established insurers—notably Blue Cross/Blue Shield—won't, at present, take risks on poor patients, one can guess how the poor would fare here. Bad guarantors as they are of expanding profit margins, they would be passed over for "better risks"—the (comparatively) healthy middle classes.

Gephardt and Stockman do have an out for bad risks. They would get "vouchers," which I imagine would look something like health-care food



stamps. These would be carried to and fro in a shopping tour that encourages what "competition" literature calls "the prudent buyer." With these vouchers, the "prudent" poor are to buy into "pre-paid" plans. Hope springs eternal: could what failed so dismally in California in the '70s work on a national level in the '80s?

"The free-market idea," said Victor Sidel, professor of the Department of Social Medicine at Montefiore Hospital and Medical Center, New York, "won't work for medicine." For one thing, "competition" plans will avoid people with the greatest medical needs, since they can't make money on them. For another, the consumer can't research "the medical product" by trial and error. "You only have one gall bladder removed in your lifetime. You can't know about that the way you know about a can of Ajax." All enlightened medical thinking, says Sidel, has linked treatment with preventive medicine, and preventive medicine must be tied into a community. "The way to develop good programs is to work on a community-wide basis, from the bottom up, and with participation in the political process. There has to be community control and participation, and you don't get that when a company comes in to make money for its stockholders."

Actually Reagan is eschewing some elements of the Gephardt-Stockman plan (on the grounds that it promotes too much government regulation)—but not others. For instance, as in environmental matters, deregulation will proceed apace here. There will be less regulation of state health expenses (recall the charges against California mismanagement and *de facto* deregulation in the pre-paid plans), since state health planning programs are to be eliminated. Medicare patients (the elderly) are to



have their share of medical expenses increased to enhance "cost awareness." Let the victim beware.

Two communities are broken.

As I write this an image sticks in my mind. It is of a man I saw last March in the intensive care unit of a large New York public hospital. Discovered incoherent on the floor of his room by his brother, he had been brought to the hospital where he was diagnosed for alcoholism, kidney failure and meningitis, and strapped to the ICU bed by his wrists and ankles. Now he lay mute, huddled in a fetal position. He was small, with pale brown skin and dark, lustrous eyes. It was the huddled, defenseless posture that was most striking—the exquisite and terrible vulnerability of us all in extreme illness.

Later that day I saw the man thrashing about like a trapped animal fighting hunters. A group of nurses stood—one at each side of the bed, several at the foot, and one at the head—trying to shove an endotracheal tube down his throat. Every time he bucked, the nurses at the foot of the bed held his legs while the nurse at the head tried to wrestle the tube down. It was hard to tell whether the nurses' laughter, peals of which filled the ICU, was caused by nervousness, or a sense of comic absurdity, or both. In any case I found myself rooting for the patient even while knowing that the tube was doubtlessly necessary to keep him from choking.

It isn't my intent to blame the nurses or even the intern who tore aside the sheet earlier that morning to show me the patient's frail body and the medical handiwork that had been wrought upon it. ("You should have seen me zapping in all his lines this morning," said the intern. "Took me less than 10 minutes.") Individual blame isn't at issue. The real

issue is the human impoverishment of one of the most technically sophisticated medical systems in the world—the way it crystallizes and fixes in one's mind, in scarifying images, the brutalization and fragmentation of life in the whole society.

"In illness," writes John Berger in his portrait of an English doctor, *A Fortunate Man*, "many connections are severed. Illness separates and encourages a distorted, fragmented form of self-consciousness. The doctor, through his relationship with the invalid and by means of the special intimacy he is allowed, has to compensate for these broken connections and reaffirm the social content of the invalid's aggravated self-consciousness." That is, in illness we are forced continually to think about ourselves, and to feel cut off from our fellows in a way that is horribly unique. The doctor's task in part is to reconnect us to the rest of humanity, to reassure us that illness has not impaired our likeness to the rest of the world, the healthy world. Berger writes of the "fraternal relationship" that binds his hero to the patients he serves in a rural English village. Any patient, writes Berger, "expects" fraternity—a recognition that comes as human, psychological support, as well as in the form of scientific diagnosis.

The British National Health Service, in which Berger's hero works, has shortcomings that have been frequently criticized. Nonetheless (at least 14 years ago when Berger wrote the book) it still permitted experiences of wholeness—what health and the healing process should be—that have been all but lost in American medicine. The man strapped to his bed in the New York public hospital intensive care unit is an image of isolation. No one touches him with caring: he is a recalcitrant object to be mastered. It is almost as if the endotracheal tube were the essential part of the ministrations around the bed, while the man was incidental. Dark, starkly outlined in the middle of the bed, he is a life wrenched from its moorings, a testimony to things coming apart in the communities of the very poor. In this he is only a harsher symbol of what most of us at one time or other fear of life in its more terrifying aspects in America. The hospital merely extends and throws loneliness and alienation into high relief. Illness becomes the more sinister face of what happens to all of us, with varying degrees of frequency, in health.

Reagan's policies won't change the content of American medicine, the savagery of which has long been to make profitable business of disease. Whatever the health future is under Reagan, it will only lay bare that ugly fact.

Ellen Cantarow, author of *Moving the Mountain: Women Working for Social Change*, is attending the Boston University School of Public Health. Members of the Health Policy Advisory Center (Health/PAC) assisted in the research for this series. Contact them at Health/PAC, 17 Murray St., New York, NY.



Richard Stromberg

EDIT

IT'S NOT A GREAT
SOCIETY..BUT, IT'S A
GOOD SOCIETY.

Mike Peters

The AFL-CIO takes a big first step

The late George Meany always opposed AFL-CIO sponsorship of protest demonstrations. To Meany, demonstrations—and even strikes—smacked of the unruly '30s when the labor movement briefly broke the bonds of the AFL's business unionism. Meany even refused to cosponsor Martin Luther King's 1963 Civil Rights March on Washington.

In contrast, Lane Kirkland, Meany's hand-picked successor, has sponsored and helped fund a Solidarity Day demonstration Sept. 19 against the Reagan administration's economic policies. Putting the labor movement on a more militant, popular footing, he is refusing to accommodate unions like the Airline Pilots Association that prefer a more conciliatory tack toward the Reagan administration.

We applaud Kirkland and the AFL-CIO's initiative and urge *In These Times* readers to attend Solidarity Day. But we have some questions about the effectiveness of the protest.

It is both useful and depressing to compare the Sept. 19 demonstration with the 1963 civil rights march. The King march climaxed almost a decade of civil rights organizing in the South. It summed up the outrage that millions had come to feel and communicated it to the government as a demand for new civil rights legislation. The strategy worked: Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The Solidarity Day demonstration does not climax years or even months of growing grassroots outrage or activity. On the contrary, it occurs at a time when labor's hold over its rank and file and its respect among the general populace have been steadily eroded, and when labor's top leadership has given only token support to the striking air controllers.

The reversal of this erosion obviously requires more than a one-shot demonstration, in which millions are spent busing trade unionists to Washington for a day. Labor needs to take steps both in the workplace (where worker participation is becoming management's rather than labor's slogan) and in the political arena to

instill interest in and hope for a working people's alternative to corporate-dominated government.

For some member unions and for the public Solidarity Day will be part of what is now a continuing process of political education. But it can be questioned whether it will serve this purpose for Kirkland and the AFL-CIO officialdom.

All the AFL-CIO's other political initiatives have had the opposite effect of Solidarity Day. They have been designed to limit popular participation in politics. For instance, Kirkland and other labor leaders have worked assiduously since Jimmy Carter's defeat last November to capture control of the Democratic Party for themselves and to ensure their control over the nominating process. They have set out to gut the "McGovern reforms," beginning with the mid-term Democratic convention. They are now out to make primary decisions no longer binding on party delegates. The former step will discourage local party activism and the latter will even discourage voting.

Kirkland has also reassembled a new labor-management group, chaired by himself and Exxon head Clifford Garvin. His precise motives for doing so cannot be gleaned, but a fair guess is that he wants to trade labor's lobbying influence over such projects as Exxon's Western Colorado shale oil development for a more moderate stance by corporate leaders on issues important to labor. Such deals among the elite will increase popular and rank-and-file estrangement from the AFL-CIO leadership.

Protest without program.

There is another important contrast between Solidarity Day and King's 1963 march. The 1963 march had a precise political and legislative focus. Solidarity Day does not. The demonstration will communicate outrage and anger at Reaganomics, but not a coherent alternative, either in the form of a program or a single piece of legislation.

Of course, the AFL-CIO has several

programs to go along with its particular grievances against the Reagan administration—from national health insurance to Felix Rohatyn's Reconstruction Finance Corporation—but these programs do not translate into a coherent alternative to Reaganomics. If they appear to be anything, it is a rehash of all the programs associated with the failures of the Great Society and the Carter administration.

Let's take the current issue in Washington, which is how to reduce the federal deficit so as to remove the upward pressure on interest rates. Even Reagan's advisors have been forced to admit that the defense budget must be reduced a bit. But the kind of reductions they are discussing are cosmetic and will only force further reductions in social spending programs.

For instance, a reduction of \$10-15 billion in the current \$222 billion defense budget—a 14.6 percent real increase over 1981—will still leave the Reagan budget \$10 to 15 billion higher than Carter's 1982 budget, and the Carter budget already projected a 5.3 percent real growth in defense spending. We are still talking about 10 percent real increases. The increases for the next years will still stand at about 7 percent. And these increases remain predicated on an interventionist foreign policy in the third world and upon the absence of arms control agreements with the Soviet Union.

At the urging of the UAW's Douglas Fraser, the Machinists' William Winpinger, and AFSCME's Jerry Wurf, the AFL-CIO at its August executive council meeting edged away from its usual blanket endorsement of defense spending increases and suggested that there might be some waste in the defense budget. But there is no indication that Kirkland, a founding member of the Committee on the Present Danger, is willing to take on the Reagan foreign and defense policies.

Without any unified challenge to these defense policies, it is difficult to meet

administration arguments on interest rates and deficits. The AFL-CIO leaders, in defending social programs against the Reagan cuts, seem merely to be calling for greater spending and therefore renewed inflation, higher deficits and higher interest rates. And they also slam the door on the millions of Americans who under the impact of the Vietnam War came to question American defense priorities.

The AFL-CIO also finds itself backed into a corner on the question of "big government." In an August press conference, Kirkland explained that labor did not favor "big government," but maintained that government should serve as "an instrument for the reduction of gross inequality and injustice."

This formulation doesn't go beyond the New Deal. It is hardly adequate for formulating any long-range alternatives to Reaganomics. These alternatives must assume government control of investment with the goal of full employment and stable prices. In some of its programs, the AFL-CIO and member unions are beginning to approach this position, but the federation's rhetoric and political philosophy remain lodged in the 1930s.

But these doubts and questions about the AFL-CIO's strategy should not dampen enthusiasm for Solidarity Day, which is an important and courageous step in the right direction by the labor movement. In the absence of any other public force willing to oppose Reagan's enrichment of the few and impoverishment of the many, labor remains the only substantial force currently moving toward sustained opposition.

In These Times circulation for the week ending Sept. 16, with comparative figures for one year ago:

	Week of Sept. 16	One year ago
Subscriptions	22,079	17,569
Bookstores	2,069	2,200
TOTAL	24,148	19,769

NICHOLAS VON HOFFMAN

Labor's problems are the nation's problems

YET ONE MORE TIME, SEPT. 19, the unions march in Washington. The sound on the asphalt is not the stamping tread of labor united, but the supplicant shuffle of disorganized labor that has been drained of the power to "reward its friends and punish its enemies." That famous phrase from the Gompers era sounds like ironic mockery.

The failure of union officials—you can't call those office holder leaders—to reach out for blacks or women or the antiwar movement has been dwelt upon enough. The ill effects of those omissions, however, are compounded by iron headed adherence to the go-it-alone independent strategies inherited from Samuel Gompers and his times.

Unions cannot prevail, they cannot even hold their own, by themselves. It has been repeated in various industries—steel, rubber, garment, glass—but the experience of the auto workers at Chrysler shows what must happen when unionism is without a permanent political expression, a party. It made no difference that the UAW had been the most politically active of the big unions, that its officers have been most inclined to agree that unions unattached to a political party end in powerlessness.

Without the shield of a national political party programmatically committed

to protect it, the union's fate had to be tied to the company's. The adversarial relationship crumbled as the union was forced to take on the role of foreman, employee relations supervisor and administrator of wage cuts and lay-offs. By 1979 there was no other way. An independent Gompers-style union, no matter how honestly and energetically run, is helpless when the corporation with whom it has this isolated symbiotic relationship starts to go down. Short-sightedly selfish as some English unions can be, through the instrumentality of their labor party they have done reasonably well at protecting their people when the business goes sour.

The decimation of the air controllers' strike can be written off as the ineluctable reaction of Reaganism to uppityness by public employees. Call it Republicans being Republicans, but when Democrats are being Democrats, it can be as devastating. In the easy years, Democratic politicians, especially at the state and local level, accommodated to the union demands and passed the bills on to a public whose purchasing power was growing and who therefore didn't mind too much. But it was also the Democratic Jimmy Carter who smashed the coal strike by declaring a serious national emergency and did damage to the union from which it has yet to recover. It was later rejected by the courts, but it was good enough to

get the temporary Taft-Hartley restraining order that broke the union's back. It was the pro-labor president who advertised himself as a tender-hearted, empathetic wimp who sent the federal marshalls up into the hollers of West Virginia to serve papers on men who spit to see if the first symptoms of black lung will fly out of their mouths.

Since unionism isn't built into the party, Democratic attitudes toward labor organizations wax and wane with the prevailing public moods. Often there is no fixed, over-all policy; rather each union much deal for itself so that as Carter was doing his best to destroy the coal miners he was creating a new, special, cabinet level department for the National Education Association, the dominant teachers' union.

For the unskilled and the replaceable, successful union organization only began when government power was shifted over to the workers' side with the enactment of the Wagner Labor Relations Act. Without it, organizing a company, much less winning a strike, was occasional and heroic. But changing conditions and the whittling away of the Act's protections has, over the course of many years, come close to nullifying it. Nor can labor get it reinstated by coming to Congress as a special pleader, one of any number of groups clamoring for this or that kind of help.

To restore the edge that the Wagner Act once gave unions is an act of policy so large a political party must be committed to it in a major way. Like supply side economics, it is not a measure to be slipped through or quietly lobbied on to a sympathetic president's desk for his signature.

This may be a propitious hour for unions joining the Democratic Party. If the Reagan cuts are anything like advertised, the need for getting direct emergency services—fuel, food, rent—from non-gov-

ernment sources will be more acute than it has in 40 years. Unions, like the old-time city machines, may find this is a way to build part of the political power base they must have.

Not that reversing community hostility to unions and reinvigorating the Wagner Act can turn the trick by itself. Chrysler limps along to remind us that a completely organized work force in a company spurting red ink can't, no matter how strong and intelligent its union leadership, separate itself from the dying company. Nor can a union protect its members against pay cuts resulting from technological, organizational, and merchandising change such as has occurred in the meat packing industry where a firm like Illinois Packing rendered the skilled butcher an old-time nostalgia character advertising Shake 'n' Bake on TV. (And God knows what will happen to salaries as millions of non-union women typists and filing clerks find the skill levels needed to do their jobs degraded by the word processor and other electronic office machines.)

The dislocations and changes in every aspect of employment are far beyond the power of even the strongest union to handle. Most employers are as helpless as unions in that they don't create their competitive situations, they react to them. Even industry-wide bargaining is of little help in a low tariff, free trade nation like ours. The disasters that have overtaken the American rubber and tire industry would not have been avoided by a different bargaining set-up or different bargaining demands.

The crux of these matters are society-wide, not industry-wide. They must be handled through national policy and national planning, not by our friendly business agent with four unsmoked stogies tucked in his vest pocket, pleading with a senator to "give us the secondary boycott back and you'll never see us again." ■

VERNON JARRETT

Black Democrats turn to the Republicans for help

THE LEADERSHIP OF THE Democratic National Committee is privately "sweating" over the internal black revolt that is spreading within the party over congressional reapportionment.

"The DNC has not gone entirely public with its feelings—yet," I was told by a DNC staff member Thursday, "but it's just a matter of time. The party's leadership is disturbed and disgusted."

The party's latest problem is the spread of a variety of coalitions of Republicans and black Democrats who work together in state legislatures to assure the election of more black and Republican congressmen. What was once a little special wheeling and dealing restricted to a few states has now spread to at least 10 states.

Republican-black coalitions in the legislatures of Illinois, Texas and Georgia have set a pattern that could "polarize the Democratic Party for years," the DNC staffer said. "But now the situation may be getting out of hand."

Such coalitions are now in motion in South Carolina, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina and Louisiana.

It is a simple coalition that requires no great gift of imagination. In some instances, the initiative comes from a black Democrat; in another state, it may be a Republican who says, "You help us and we will help you get more or keep what you have."

The Democratic Party clearly is vulnerable, said Georgia state Sen. Julian Bond (D-Atlanta), one of the most vocal leaders of the revolt. Bond said he is "absolutely" against the economic policies of President Reagan, but "I'm also against being misused by my fellow Democrats."

Bond said he had "no hesitancy about working Republicans or anybody else to gain more political representation for black citizens."

Bond and other black Georgia legislators have joined the Republicans in redrawing the 5th Congressional District in Atlanta to assure the election of a black congressman. The district is 53 percent black and represented by Rep. Wyche

district as another incumbent white Democrat, Elliott H. Levitas. Both could lose to a Republican if the newly remapped 4th District becomes a fact.

Bond has no apologies for his "temporary coalition" with Republicans. "All over this country our fellow Democrats are using black voters to keep themselves in office," Bond said. "They want us to remain only 30 percent or 40 percent of a district to assure the election of white Democrats."

"What these Democrats are doing is making black people pay for the desertion of whites from the cities. Why should we pay when the percentage of blacks in the cities goes up as the whites leave?"

In Louisiana, the leader of the black revolt, state Sen. Henry Braden, insists that New Orleans should have a black congressman in the wake of population

produced a congressional map that will assure a new black congressman while adding three Republican seats. Endangered are Democratic stalwarts Rep. Jim Wright, majority leader, and Rep. Bill Patman.

In Maryland, the Republican-black initiative is creating a congressional district that could be 60 percent black. It is the 5th District near Washington that has experienced a great influx of black residents in the last decade.

There's a big revolt in New York City, where earlier it was felt that the only battle was to maintain the city's two black congressmen, Rep. Shirley Chisholm and Rep. Charles Rangel.

In the last few months, black Democrats and Republicans have noted that the 7th District, which is represented by Democratic Rep. Joseph P. Addabbo, is 65 percent black, and that Rep. Fred Richmond's 14th District is 80 percent black. Both congressmen are white.

"Why must blacks always seek permission from our fellow Democrats to represent ourselves where we have obvious majorities?" Bond asked.

Knowledgeable blacks have a genuine respect for Rep. Peter W. Rodino Jr. (D-N.J.), chairman of the House Judiciary Committee. But, again, why can't a black man have a chance to represent a district that is 55 percent black?

A similar coalition is shaping up in South Carolina, where blacks and Republicans are striking a deal that could give that state its first black congressman since Reconstruction.

Bond said he regrets that in nearly all of these intraparty clashes "a white Democrat is hurt, while black Democrats are helped and white Republicans make gains."

"But why should black Democrats suffer? This situation is the result of the absolute inattention that the Democratic Party has paid to the reapportionment process all over this country," he said.

"It's also a matter of money," he added. "The Republicans have invested millions. They hired some of the most sophisticated computer technicians to help redesign districts for their benefit. The Democrats have done nothing." ■

1981, Chicago Tribune
Used with permission



Georgia State Senator Julian Bond is one of several black legislators who have entered into temporary coalitions with Republicans on reapportionment.

Fowler Jr., a Southern liberal Democrat who succeeded Andrew Young. Young was Georgia's first and only black congressman.

The Bond plan, which was being considered last week by a conference of both houses of the state legislature, would increase the district's black population to 69 percent and place Fowler in the same

shifts there. Black Democrats and Republicans have proposed a district that will be at least 55 percent black.

But that is not good news for supporters of Democratic liberal Lindy Boggs, whose 2nd Congressional District will lose its black base if the black-GOP coalition plans become official.

In Dallas, a black-GOP coalition has

PERSPECTIVES

So that's what the rich do with their tax rebates

By Thomas Brom

A

UGUST'S MERGER MANIA on Wall Street all but confirmed the Twilight Zone origins of the administration's supply-side economic policies.

The same week President Reagan gave U.S. business \$60 billion in tax cuts to stimulate investment, Dupont spent \$7.4 billion for majority stock control of Conoco. The purchase, by all accounts, did nothing either to raise production or create jobs.

Dupont and its two competitors for Conoco, Mobil Oil and Seagrams, together had bank credit of nearly \$14 billion during a time of highly restrictive monetary policy. At least 13 giant companies—most of them oil companies—now have bank credit lines of \$1 billion or more to finance corporate takeovers.

Yet the Congress bought, lock, Stockman and barrel, the president's accelerated depreciation and tax credit systems as a way to spur productive investment. "It would be more cost-efficient," says economist William Kenan of Northwestern University, "to have the government buy the new plant and equipment and give them to business."

Although American corporations lobbied hard for the Reagan tax cuts, few showed much belief this summer in the philosophy allegedly behind them. The companies are operating at only 80 percent of productive capacity, and clearly are in no hurry to invest. Instead, they spent \$35.7 billion in the first half of 1981 buying other businesses.

"It's a giant monopoly game," says Milton Moskowitz, a syndicated business columnist and editor of *Everybody's Business: An Irreverent Guide to Corporate America*. "The big companies go around the board to see what they can buy, competing for acquisitions."

But there's more to it than that. The merger battles of 1981 have a pattern that suggests the direction of American capitalism during the Reagan years, despite the best efforts of David Stockman. And

more important, the mergers present an obvious target for progressive attack using new strategies to suit a radically changing American economy.

Merger waves have hit the corporate world before, most often during periods of economic stagnation when investment in new plants and equipment wasn't profitable. In the late 1960s, corporations used elaborate credit schemes to diversify into totally unrelated businesses, an idea that produced a few huge conglomerates and a lot of bad debts.

But by 1979, two-thirds of the deals were in cash—a corporate alternative to either reinvesting or declaring a cash dividend. And more important, the mergers often were decided by a handful of bank trust departments, insurance companies and pension fund managers who control large blocks of stock.

"We have more than 70,000 shareholders, but not more than 30 people determined our fate," said Conoco's chairman Ralph Bailey after the bidding was over.

The current mergers are concentrated in two main sectors: energy and finance. The major oil companies in particular are heavy with cash from OPEC price increases and the decontrol of domestic oil. During the chase for Conoco, five major companies arranged credit lines totaling an incredible \$24.7 billion. "The money is burning a hole in their pockets," Moskowitz says. "They don't have the wit to produce on their own, so they buy."

The most attractive investment for that cash is hard assets, natural resources that are undervalued at today's stock prices. "The value of U.S. oil in the ground has increased tenfold in the past decade to \$1 trillion," says Doug Dowd, an economist at San Jose State University. As a result, the so-called "second tier" oil companies are now eagerly being courted by industry giants who believe oil assets have nowhere to go but up.

Mineral companies are a close second choice on the current auction block: in the past four years, Atlantic Richfield bought Anaconda copper, Sohjo pur-

chased Kennecott, and Fluor Corporation acquired St. Joe Minerals.

In the finance sector, investment banking houses are being bought by corporations eager to get a foothold on Wall Street. Since April, Prudential Insurance has acquired Bache Group, American Express bought Shearson Loeb Rhoades, Bechtel purchased Dillon Co., and Philbro Corp. bought Salomon Brothers.

"The mergers represent a linkage between industrial and finance capital," says Ned Pearlstein, an economist at Laney College in Oakland. "They guarantee companies access to finance capital at better terms than they could get on the open market."

Commercial banks and thrift institutions are also consolidating at a rapid pace since passage of the Banking Deregulation Act in 1980. "The industry ex-

Sold to the public as a stimulant of productive investment, tax savings can only spur speculation.

pects that the 14,000 existing commercial banks will be reduced by half over the next 10 years," adds Dowd. Congress is even considering a federal bailout for the many savings and loans expected to fold during the same period.

Monopoly.

What this represents, according to Dowd, is not just concentration of capital but increasing centralization across economic sectors. "We're not starting from virginity on this," he says. "It's a process that has been going on since the 1960s, and is part of monopoly capitalism."

The most remarkable aspect of the summer mergers is the business-as-usual attitude taken by the Justice Department, most Democrats and the trade union leadership. The Reagan administration turned the other cheek to the Conoco deal, even though Republicans in the past have been among the most eager defenders of competition in the marketplace. The huge merger, said Justice Department anti-trust chief William Baxter, "was largely an exchange of pieces of paper." Attorney General William French Smith even gave the companies a friendly signal by promising to withdraw from a four-year anti-trust action against AT&T.

Ohio Senator Howard Metzenbaum

and Rep. Peter Rodino (D-N.J.) warned gamely that mergers would take capital from more productive uses and endanger small business. But all Rodino could offer were House Judiciary Committee hearings in the fall.

UAW president Douglas Fraser was one of the few labor leaders even to comment on the mergers, saying that he hadn't been speaking out because "it's saving the jobs of the workers that I'm concerned about." He added, "I'm for mergers, particularly where you can strengthen the companies."

The populist response.

It's hard to believe that barely a hundred years ago, workers and small farmers fought the railroad trust to a standstill. Populists swept to office across the country by attacking Rockefeller and J.P. Morgan. The House passed the Sherman Anti-Trust Act unanimously in 1890, Republican President Teddy Roosevelt promised to bust the trusts, and in 1911 the Supreme Court broke up Standard Oil. It didn't work, but small business nevertheless felt it still controlled the economy.

"The anti-trust laws were an anachronism the day they were passed," comments Doug Dowd. "There was never any serious enforcement—just an attempt to slow down the pace of concentration. It's like speeding laws—if you knew there were no cops, you'd speed up."

In the past century, however, the populist base—small farmers and small businessmen—has declined rapidly in power and prestige. Barely 4 percent of the workforce is still on the farm, and while small businesses remain large in numbers, they have a smaller and smaller share of markets and capital.

"A lot of small businesses are now franchised, tied directly to big capital," says Dick Walker, a geographer at the University of California, Berkeley. "A lot more people now work for big corporations."

"I think there's still a lot of anti-corporate sentiment around," adds Jim Hawley, a sociologist at the University of California, Davis. "But it's very diffuse—there's no program, and no leadership."

Moskowitz favors a worker response to corporate mergers similar to the employee stock ownership trust (ESOP) organized this spring by Continental Airlines employees trying to fend off a takeover by Texas International. Pearlstein supports a limited form of nationalization that incorporates democratic control of the economy. "What's important is the chance for worker participation, not trying to bring back competition to the marketplace. That's naive."

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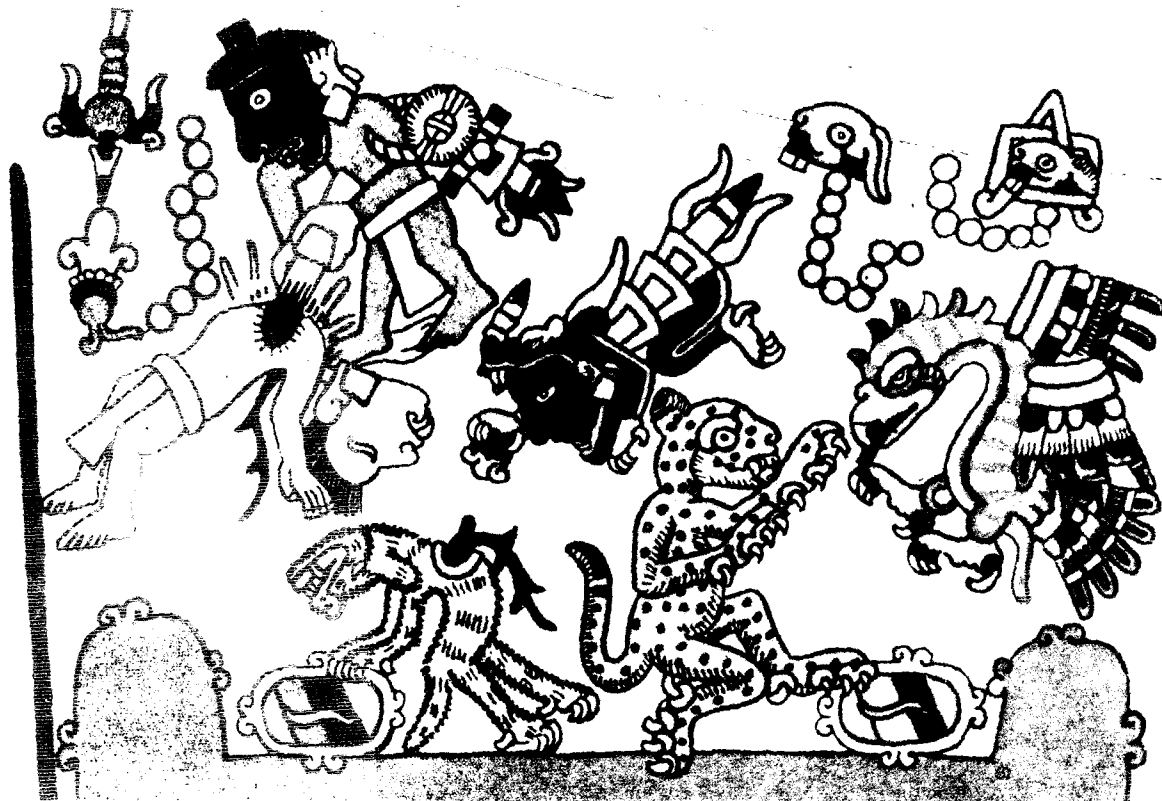
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INPRINT

FICTION



Aztecs' decline and fall



Sacrifice played a key role in the Aztecs' sudden rise to power (above, Aztec religious ritual as drawn in a Mixtec manuscript, the *Codex Nuttall*).

The Luck of Huemac

by Daniel Peters

Random House, 637 pp., \$16.95

By Pat Aufderheide

This is excellent proof of the value of historical fiction. It imparts a felt reality of a world usually foreign to us—in this case the ruthlessness, fanaticism, weakness, asceticism, contradictory civilization of the Aztecs.

The Aztecs have traditionally been opaque to us, in all their grandeur and horror. Any child who pored over old stacks of *National Geographic* knows the sacrificial images—the high temples, the seminude priests, the bloody captives whose hearts were ripped out with obsidian knives. There are other baffling aspects to Aztec culture—the startling rapidity of their rise to power, in less than a century to dominance over central Mexico when Cortez arrived; other city-states' acceptance of the "flower wars," battles that were fixed to garner captives for Aztec gods; the ceremonially important ballgame; the juxtaposition of graceful lyric poetry and brutal warrior cults; their capitulation before a handful of white men.

But the thing that always fascinates us is human sacrifice, and its rapid increase as the Aztecs grew in political power. Many theories have been propounded to explain it, one of the silliest being a pseudo-Marxist argument that they used captives to supplement a meat-poor diet. Anthropologist Marshall Sahlins didn't even need *Diet for a Small Planet* arguments on the ecological costs of generating meat protein to show, in a *New York Review* article, that the explanation left the real question untouched. Why would the Aztecs choose that method among all their options, the range of which was demonstrated before, after and around them?

This novel gradually builds a reality so gripping that we understand the answer—or an answer at any rate—to that question by the time the invaders arrive. Referred to alternately as invaders

or as gods, they come into Tenochtitlan, the Aztec capital (now Mexico City), as puzzling, crude, incalculable destroyers, beings who in their refusal of a bowlful of human blood show their distance from any familiar cultural reference.

They are not, however, simple barbarians. They are agents of a foreordained tragedy, the apocalypse of Mexican culture.

Dynastic saga.

The story is told through a four-generation family saga, of a family connected, often fractiously, with the center of Aztec politics.

In a war with his enemies from the other side of Lake Texcoco, a Texcocan ruler allies with an upstart group inhabiting two islands in the lake, Tlatelulco and Tenochtitlan. One of his warriors is forced, by the edict of his gods and by pressure from the grey eminence of Tenochtitlan, to stay in the island city and serve the court. His exile is sustained by marriage to his old Texcocan lord's daughter, who tempers his adaptation to the cruelties of Mexican society.

We follow this family through four generations of social turmoil. The center of the story becomes Huemac, the warrior-courtier's son, born under a bad sign in time of famine, fated for great spiritual powers and ill luck. Huemac's fierce integrity, as much as his impressive ugliness and unsettling spiritual powers, makes him political enemies—and also makes him politically indispensable.

Huemac avoids assassination by fleeing, as an adolescent, into the mountains to live with the hunting-and-gathering Chichimecs, from whose culture the Aztecs had come. He also learns their magic, including shape-shifting and visions.

On his return the deadly drama of Aztec ascendancy, built on a warrior cult of glory and sacrifice, continues. He uses his skills and power to protect the future of his people and his family. So when he backs a weak and impulsive ruler, he does so

knowing the alternative is worse; when he creates a new ballplaying style it is part of a strategy to change the meaning of the game within political ceremony. Nothing in Huemac's world is accidental, partly because he is willy-nilly in the center of politics and partly because the religious structure of the Aztec universe does not permit accident.

It does permit disaster, brought on by the incompetence of the irresponsibly powerful, famines and floods plague the rising city-states. So do the constant demands of war. In the end, the premises on which power was gained are those on which it is lost, and with it many of the earthy, rich souls who tried so hard to do well within the terms of Aztec ascendancy.

The author (his three earlier novels are all contemporary; *Border Crossings* is a love story about a draft dodger) exercises a deceptively simple and vigorous

narrative style. It has a vividness that makes the scenes unfold with cinematic intensity. It has a dignity that erases the distance between our expectations and theirs. And it has a passion that makes these people's conflicts and desires our own for the moment—they can be judged but never moralized about.

One of Peters' skills is to give you, always by showing, just enough information to let you understand the scene, revealing deeper meanings later so that the pieces slowly come together. The tapestry slowly becomes a three-dimensional picture and then takes on a life of its own. One of his assets in this recreation is his deep respect for the spiritual autonomy of other cultures. The gods of the Aztecs and of the Chichimec are different, and he grants each spiritual universe a reality that the invaders cannot share. The shock of confrontation is registered when the invaders arrive, and Catholic gods meet Aztec ones blankly and without comprehension. By the end, for all the brutality of the Aztec world, it's possible to feel a loss returning to our own secular one, dominated just as the Aztec court is by intrigue, corruption and pettiness, but often lacking its spiritual resonance.

Peters is also aided by a healthy understanding of the difference between religion and spirituality. Huemac and his family all have a rare direct access to spirituality, while the priests belong to the political aspirations of the Aztec rulers. Watching Huemac strategize, occasionally employing his special powers, is a Machiavellian lesson.

Then and now.

There are a host of other political comparisons to make in *The Luck of Huemac*. Each generation of the family serves, perforce, in court, whether as advisor, warrior, ballplayer or priestess. Each learns that at some point you become what you pretend to be. And each learns that a cleanly right position does not exist for those who assume social responsibility. You always have to play with the cards you have.

The powerful illogic of personality is also a cautionary theme; the wrong man in the right place creates untold havoc. There are lessons in leadership here that *The Once and Future King* could envy, and they are done without preaching. Weld-

ing of character with political option is complete. When the last Motecuzuma takes office we know—because we know who's coming—it is devastating that the man is a timid zealot, a tradition-monger. When the "gods" arrive, he will invite them in. We also see, however, the way choices made earlier in Aztec history have made him likely, if not inevitable.

An unstressed theme is the parallel to our own predicament. There is, of course, the repetition of ecological disaster on the site of Tenochtitlan, where today the lake has dried up, the air has turned grey and still people flood into the 10 million-plus megalopolis. There is a wider, international parallel as well. People who generate nuclear wastes faster than anyone can think of them, who bluster about the need for ever-greater arms budgets and who eat up natural resources at a rate that can be measured in tons of coal and acres of rain forest per hour have something to learn from the political predicaments of Huemac and his family.

Peters has recreated a world dramatically different from ours, let us live in it and discover its differences and similarities to ours. The parallels are not fortuitous. His next two books, he says, will be on the Mayas and Incas. "Each of the novels in the trilogy," he said, "will be concerned with cultures in collapse. It's a topic I feel I'm living with daily."

The comparison is sobering. And you wonder—who would write (who would be left to write?) an epitaph for our world with the mournful succinct grace of this Aztec "flower song"?

"Nothing but flowers and songs of sorrow are left in Mexico and Tlatelulco, Where once we saw warriors and wise men."



ZORA NEALE HURSTON

Rediscovering voodoo culture



Drawing a design with cornmeal invites deities to a voodoo ceremony.

Tell My Horse

By Zora Neale Hurston

Turtle Press, 2845 Buena Vista Way, Berkeley, CA 94708, 312 pp., \$8.95 (paper)

By Barbara Christian

The reissuing of *Tell My Horse* has much to do with contemporary Afro-American scholars and writers' discovery of Hurston as a major Afro-American writer and anthropologist of the 1920s, '30s and '40s. She was one of the first Afro-Americans, one of the first women and one of the first scholars to seriously study the culture of New World blacks. She devised her own technique in pursuing this subject, having studied anthropology at Barnard under Franz Boas, the father of American an-

Continued on page 17

LIFE IN THE U.S.

ENVIRONMENT

Rocky Mountain lows

By John Judis

ESTES PARK—Estes Park is a small town on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountain National Park, a jumping-off place for hikers, backpackers, fishermen and people driving through. Its once-quiet main drag is now as congested as the Chicago Loop, with cars backed up into intersections, and tourists jamming the boutiques and novelty shops that have sprung up in the last few years. Motel rooms now cost about \$35 a night, and a decent meal can run \$15 a person.

Those who prefer to sleep in a tent and make their meals over a wood fire can pay \$.55 a night to stay in one of the park's campgrounds, but good luck—they are invariably filled up, as are the National Forest sites down the road.

Campers who want to avoid the amusement park ambience of the park campgrounds can try for a "backcountry permit" at the park's offices. Some of the backpacking campsites require a two-hour stroll; others a seven-hour vertical trek. Out-of-state backpackers expecting to pick up their permits upon arrival and begin hiking are usually disappointed. The limited campsites have been reserved weeks in advance by Coloradans.

Far from having peaked in the '70s, the camping boom has only begun. It is inspired not only by urban decay, bad air and dissatisfaction with a white-collar lifestyle, but also by the even-greater costs of other forms of recreation. For instance, \$40 won't get you into the lobby of most New York City hotels, and \$15 would only buy some *hors d'oeuvres*.

The Reagan administration's reactions to the camping boom have been as predictable as they are outrageous: remove funds from the budget for the purchase of new national park land, lease wilderness to energy companies, and transfer the management of the parks to private enterprise. This summer the Park Service began accepting applications from private firms to run the services at Yellowstone National Park. "To spur increased concessionaire creativity," Interior



Watt's invitations to private entrepreneurs may increase the amusement park ambience of public parks.

Secretary James Watt explained, "we must seek the maximum co-operation of private enterprise."

After the last creative concessionaire, General Host of Stamford, Conn., made a shambles of the park, the park bought them out for a generous \$19 million and resumed running the park itself. Yosemite has also had problems with its private concessionaire. Now Watt is not only offering Yellowstone to the highest bidder, he is removing the yearly fees and short-term leases and reviews that gave the park what little leverage it had over the private firms.

Agriculture Secretary John Block, whose department runs the national forests, takes an even dimmer view of the public welfare. Block recently proposed

raising the fees for National Forest campsites. He was not concerned about maintenance costs, but rather about competing with the conglomerates presently trying to make a buck off campers. "The Forest Service will not try to undercut the private sector in producing products and services," Block declared.

GRAND LAKE—Grand Lake, an old vacation resort during the 19th century gold and silver rush, is celebrating its centennial this year. It is on the western side of the Rocky Mountain National Park, across the Continental Divide from Estes Park. It is not as crowded or tacky as Estes Park. Its residents make a fair living during the summer from campers and from tourists who come to boat or fish in Lake Granby. In the winter, its main draw is snowmobiling.

The owner of Grand Lake's only camping store describes himself as the town's "sore thumb." "I stick out here because I'm the only environmentalist around," he said. He showed me the petition he is circulating to remove Watt from office. None of the signatories are local residents.

Watt is by no means unpopular in the Rocky Mountain states. There are strong pockets of opposition—say, in Boulder—but certainly not among ranchers, farmers, energy companies, developers and the thousands who profit from the tourist trade. Arrayed under the anti-federal government rhetoric of the Sagebrush Rebellion, the ranchers, developers *et al.*

have been able to garner considerable support from westerners who would actually stand to lose if the federal government withdrew from the Rocky Mountain region.

The current incarnation of the Sagebrush Rebellion dates from 1977, when the League for the Advancement of States' Rights was formed. Its resentment is focused on federal control of land in the Rocky Mountain region—36 percent of Colorado's land and nearly 50 percent of the eight-state area of Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, Nevada, Utah, Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona—and also on federal regulation of the region's water, which has allowed hated Californians to drain off this precious and scarce resource.

The rebellion now has powerful representation in the Senate from Republicans Orrin Hatch, Jake Garn, Alan Simpson, James McClure and Peter Domenici. And last year Reagan sent his best wishes "to all my fellow Sagebrush rebels" and pledged to work "toward a Sagebrush solution." This year, Colorado's Republican-controlled legislature passed a "Sagebrush" bill that would have set up a commission to plan Colo-

and they don't like us here," Townsend and Woods told a reporter. The town's attitudes are reflected in the people, who, according to Townsend and Woods, harass the oil riggers.

Growth among the towns of Colorado's Western Slope has been dramatic. The rising cost of imported oil in the early '70s made the Rocky Mountain region's vast oil shale and natural gas deposits economically competitive. Besides oil and gas, the region also contains more than half of the nation's recoverable coal and 91 percent of its uranium.

Exxon now plans to build 150 oil-shale plants in the two counties nearest Rangely. After holding hearings on the Exxon plan, Colorado Senator Gary Hart concluded that it "would have devastating effects on Colorado. It would use all the water available in northwestern Colorado and take more from other states. It would require, each year, five times as much mining—in just two counties—as all the coal mining in the nation last year. It would produce a regional 'brown cloud' 15 times as thick as Denver's, and it would increase the number of people in northwestern Colo-

Colorado residents fear Exxon's planned boomtowns.

rado's takeover of federal lands, but Democratic Governor Richard Lamm vetoed it. Ironically, the plans to use federal lands in Utah and Nevada for the MX missile also ran into the Sagebrush buzzsaw, with the result that some of the Senate's foremost militarists came out against the proposal.

In early August, one of Grand Lake's county commissioners, Lorene Linke, visited Washington to lobby on behalf of the rebellion. Pessimistic about any immediate turnover of federal lands, Linke took aim at a transitional goal—PILT, or "payment in lieu of taxes." "I feel the federal government should pay its own way," Linke explained. "We need some of the money the land would generate if it were under private control."

In 1980 the federal government spent \$20.5 billion in the Rocky Mountain region, while receiving only \$14.5 billion in revenues. In Colorado it spent \$1.20 for every dollar it received in tax revenues. In contrast, the Midwestern states got back 79 cents for every dollar they sent to Washington.

Linke wants more federal payments on top of that. And Watt wants to continue federal taxpayer maintenance of the parks and forests, while allowing private firms to extract whatever profits they can.

RANGELY—On Aug. 19, Eric Wilfong, a 20-year-old oil worker in this energy boomtown on Colorado's Western Slope, climbed on top of the post office with two rifles and started shooting at the police, wounding two deputies before he was killed himself. Wilfong's fellow oil workers, Robin Townsend and Joe Woods, blamed the incident on growing hostility between the older residents of the town and the newly arrived oil workers, who live in trailer camps because of the lack of housing and whose need for schooling, health care, waste disposal and recreation and entertainment have strained the small communities. "They don't want the town to grow

do from a few tens of thousands to almost two million."

The strains epitomized by the Rangely shooting are now present throughout the Rocky Mountain area. They have even been given a name—the "Gillette Syndrome," after Gillette, Wyoming, a particularly overloaded former ranching town. A recent Booz-Allen & Hamilton study of Casper and Rawlins, Wyoming, found what has been a pattern in the new energy boomtowns—these cities have had to spend considerably more in providing new services than they have received in new revenues. Casper showed an annual deficit of \$654,000 and Rawlins \$1.3 million.

Some Rocky Mountain residents are even more fearful of the long-term repercussions of the energy boom. They fear a recurrence of the 19th-century boom, which left the region studded with ghost towns and unsightly excavations. "Of Colorado's 63 counties, 31 had more people in 1900 than they did in the 1970 census," Governor Lamm told *Rocky Mountain Magazine*. "And once again we are being asked to build sewer systems and water systems, schools, highways and houses for a population that will come and almost inevitably go. When the one-time harvest of energy is gone, we are not going to be left with Scarsdales and Palo Altos. We are going to be left with ghost towns or overbuilt towns that do not have the economies to continue to support them."

A recent Department of Energy study of Wyoming echoed Lamm's fears. It predicted that by 2020 new energy technology would have destroyed the basis for Wyoming's fossil fuel economy.

For Rocky Mountain uranium miners, 2020 is already here. The collapse of the nuclear power industry has led to 5,500 layoffs among uranium miners in the Rocky Mountain region. A study of the towns where Colorado's uranium miners live found a suicide rate over the last year 30 times the national average.

CULTURE SHOCK

BREAK-THROUGHS IN SCIENCE

A private research company has announced the latest in products needed for a hungry world: a diet potato chip, with oil removed without changing flavor or texture.

IT WAS INEVITABLE

The Videography Company is now producing the videotape equivalent of

Gee Lisa,
you sure do dance swell.



Muzak, "generic" imagery with "soft" transitions, called "video music environments."

Tapes include a Christmas theme, dinner music and romance mood environments.



By Phyllis Orrick

BALTIMORE

Over the past year, some 35,000 Baltimoreans have been given back their history by way of *Baltimore Voices*, a theater piece comprised of the memories and words—some 7,000 transcribed pages worth—of the people who have lived their lives in the city. "No one had ever done this before," recalls Philip Arnoult, director of Baltimore's Theatre Project, the 10-year-old community performing arts center that is the company's home.

Co-creators Helen Szablya and Barry Meiners worked from the transcripts of interviews gathered over three years by the Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project, an oral history undertaking funded in large part by the National Endowment for the Humanities. The resulting "script"—*Voices* performances range in length and complexity from one actor performing for 30 minutes to seven going the full 75—lives up to the promise that "every word in that play would be the truth as people remembered it," as Arnoult puts it.

To get the message across, the actors use singing and dancing as well as speaking—their actions amplified by slides and photo-montages. In seeking to present "history the way people remember it," *Voices* had to contain a variety of views.

"The work is not about finding the middle of the road, or an answer," Arnoult explains. "Our job is that we create a context for divergence." The city's problems with racism, labor struggles, the Depression, mingle with nostalgic memories of times when people in the city worked together, when the neighborhoods were strongest.

Baltimore Voices is a collaboration among hundreds of people ranging from scholars and oral history specialists to the people in the neighborhoods who attended rehearsals, previews and

ART «» ENTERTAINMENT

THEATER

The days of our real lives



Helen Szablya (above) and Barry Meiners transformed oral histories of Baltimore residents into performances.

performances. "By the time the play opened," Arnoult notes, "there were a minimum of 400 investors in the play." The "investors" were the neighborhood people who would drop by for an afternoon script session, as well as the members of the local advisory boards who worked closely with the actors and directors to ensure the completeness and accuracy of their city's self-portrait.

Three-and-a-half months of consultations were followed by weeks of preview performances around the city. Afterwards, local people would tell the actors what they thought about the play and suggest changes. Those

ideas were then digested by Szablya and Meiners and their co-workers during three weeks of revisions. Even today, members of the audience still approach the actors with suggestions, some of which are incorporated into newer versions. Each member of the troupe has received at least one month's training in oral history techniques; actors supplement the existing script with interviews they've conducted themselves.

The approach suggests Depression-era arts programs, like the Writers Project, which led to Walker Evans and James Agee producing *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. But *Voices* has a

difference—the means to bring the history back to the people by performing it in front of them.

The play is designed to break down into any size, length or subject matter. The object is to place no "artistic performance" limits on where or how it can be presented—as long as the artistic product maintains its highest level.

Arnoult recalls performances on the top floor of the downtown World Trade Center, one of the premier office buildings at the heart of the financial district, in which people were told to turn away from the actors and gaze out over the city, pinpointing each neighborhood as it appeared in the play. At the same time *Voices* traveled for six months, performing as often as five times a week, all over the city. The Department of Labor's Women's Bureau requested a show for a conference. The *Voices* people went to their cache of histories and pulled together a segment on women working in Baltimore.

But *Voices* is careful to include diversity in the presentations—a Little Italy audience will see segments on Baltimore's Afro-American community; an audience in one of Baltimore's black sections will witness the memories of anti-Semitism, for example. Arnoult reports "a kind of resonance" when one group hears and sees the story of another.

The *Voices* concept is being studied by other communities—urban and rural. (About 5,000 arts and humanities workers from other states have seen productions.) To date, Minneapolis-St. Paul has expressed interest and the Iowa Theater Lab (actually located in upstate New York) is putting together a scheme for a "Catskill Voices."

While the original *Voices* continues to perform this summer at the Theatre Project in downtown Baltimore, an offshoot, a *Voices* of Baltimore's labor movement, is starting to take shape. Four months of work have led to the creation of advisory boards made up of union officials and

rank and file as well as representatives of management, the academic community and local people. The process that created the original *Voices* will be further refined, if current plans continue on course. After pulling together histories—concentrating on textile and autoworkers—the *Voices* company plans to mount performances in informal settings. The play will stop from time to time and actors will solicit reactions from the audience.

Voices is the outgrowth of a movement that is 15 years old, but has only gathered attention in the past two or three years.

It was developed, Arnoult explains, by "people who came out of the civil rights movement, the educational reform movement and the anti-war movement." He notes that these theaters "are in a place for a reason"; the organizations as well as the theatrical forms are "eclectic"; "they are small by choice"; and they are committed to "make a livelihood for the artists." He says the Theatre Project is "typical and atypical," the latter because they have been "real lucky" in securing support from a broad range of sources, many of them in the federal and state governments. He warns that loss of CETA money, and the battles in the arts endowments under Reagan presage an era of "high art, mono-cultural art." In its 10 years of existence, the Theatre Project has hosted 385 companies from 28 states and 16 foreign countries.

Arnoult uses the term "underground railroad" to describe the Theatre Project's role. But the Reagan administration's arts policies threaten to derail the movement.

Baltimore Voices is scheduled for airings nationwide on the Public Broadcasting network this fall. The new title for the show, a tape of a live performance, is "The New American Neighborhood Road Show." ■ Phyllis Orrick writes for City Paper in Baltimore.

Haiti

Continued from page 15
thropology. Her long monograph, "Voodoo in America" (1931) was the first scholarly piece published on that subject by an Afro-American. Between its publication and the publication of *Tell My Horse* in 1938, she published a folklore novel, *Jonah's Gourd Vine* (1934), *Of Mules and Men* (1938), an impressive collection of black folklore, and *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (1937), a touchstone novel in the tradition of black women novelists.

Hurston believed that scholarly analysis was too restrictive a form for the rich folk culture she loved and studied—thus her use of her fine creative literary talents as a form for her academic pursuits.

Tell My Horse, though not as fine as *Their Eyes Were Watch-*

ing *God or Of Mules and Men*, bears the mark of Hurston's synthesis of creative and literary academic forms. Hurston saw this book as an attempt to explore voodoo, not as a branch of sympathetic magic but as a major world religion extending from Africa to the Caribbean and parts of South and North America. Partly because of her perpetual money problems as well as her illnesses during her field work, the book hardly approaches her goal.

The book is divided into three sections. The first is a travel journal of her Caribbean journey. Part II is pseudo-political and anthropological, often blending Hurston's naive, sometimes blatantly inaccurate analyses of Haiti's politics and the Haitian legends told to her. This section can be irritating to the contemporary reader—especially if one assumes a reading audience in the 1930s that characterized Haiti as primitive and exotic.

The third section "Voodoo in Haiti," is the core of the book.

Hurston uses her skills as an anthropologist and an Afro-American folklorist to describe and define rituals that are at the heart of this religion. The style of the writing is most decidedly Hurston's, observing and personalized rather than pedantic and detached.

"Voodoo in Haiti" was the last such piece of writing that Hurston published. After *Tell My Horse*, she published a marvelous novel, *Moses Man of the Mountain* (1939), a puzzling autobiography, *Dust Tracks in the Road* (1942) and a weak novel, *Seraph on the Sewanee* (1948). But as Robert Henenway documents in his biography, *Zora Neale Hurston* (1977), racial and sexual prejudice as well as frequent illnesses, prevented the ebullient Hurston from pursuing her anthropological work.

Though flawed, *Tell My Horse* is a necessary book for the student of Afro-American literature and anthropology. ■

Barbara Christian chairs Afro-American Studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

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COSH

Continued from page 8

known as the "Donor Option Plan." Under the plan, individual contributors to United Way can designate all or part of their pledge to any tax-exempt local health and welfare organization, not simply the members of United Way.

Of course the donor option plan won't really benefit that many groups because, as Rick Engler explains, "most organizations don't have access to the workplace" where United Way collections take place. But PHILAPOSH, with its extended network of union locals, does. "For us," says Engler, "it is potentially a gold mine." Last year, the major effort was to get the United Way organizations in counties throughout the Delaware Valley to recognize the donor option plan. Any reluctance soon disappeared when a few major unions threatened to pull out of the United Way campaign altogether unless the plan was accepted. PHILAPOSH raised \$17,000 through United Way last year. The goal for the 1981 campaign this fall is \$85,000.

According to Engler, the advantages of the donor option plan are immense. "It offers a mechanism for grass-roots fund raising. You reach thousands of rank-and-file workers who have never heard of the organization." Moreover, it is eminently democratic. "If we don't provide a local with the services it needs and expects, they can just cut us off."

In fact, the only potential problem with the plan is the hostility of many workers toward the United Way in general because the good publicity that their companies get out of it often ignores the role of local unions in actually collecting worker pledges. Engler is hoping that the opportunity to use the company check-off to fund health and safety activism will overcome this obstacle and—if last year's campaign is any indication—he may be right. "A lot of people gave to PHILAPOSH who wouldn't give otherwise," says one local union president. "We had people donating who had never given to United Way before."

However PHILAPOSH and other COSH groups resolve their financial problems, one thing seems clear. The trend of COSH groups toward strengthening their ties to the labor movement is bound to continue—to the advantage of both. "In a strange way, we're on the offensive when other groups are cutting back," says Joel Schufro of NY-COSH. "People are taking a more militant attitude. They feel that their lives are being played with and they're not going to stand for it. It's a period of real opportunity."

"None of the key health and safety struggles of the years ahead can be won without grass-roots mobilization of union memberships," adds Rick Engler. The COSH groups have proven their effectiveness in bringing that mobilization about. So the "bad actors" of the COSH movement may be around for a long time—whatever Thorne Auchter decides. ■

Robert Howard reports regularly on workplace and health and safety issues.

PATCO

Continued from page 20

trollers I studied fell well within the normal personality range."

Well, doctors disagree.

It seemed to me that anxiety over radar breakdowns might add to stress, though I could not help but think that the men exaggerated the problem. For information on computer outages I was directed to the FAA public relations office in Washington.

"No, no," said Dick Stafford, patient but weary. Yes, he explained, there had been some problems when those computers were first installed. But outages were now reduced or almost eliminated.

"What about at TRACON [Terminal Radar Air Control]?" I poked around. "What about the alpha numeric system?"

"Let me explain," said the P.R. officer. "This is a computer with a back-up computer. If there is a problem whereby false information may be fed into the system, the computer stops at once. Then it starts over. If it's less than a minute, that's considered a start over, not an outage."

Air traffic controllers pride themselves on being unflusterable. But when I got back on the picket line and mentioned start-overs and outages there was some turbulence in the air pocket around me.

"Do you know what a minute is if two planes are heading at each other at 600 miles an hour?"

"Do you know how far they've gone in ten seconds?"

"Typical," said an older man (an older controller is in his 40s). "Somebody bought the wrong equipment. He doesn't ask the controllers what information they need or what reliability. He just buys it; it doesn't do the job; he looks bad. So what does he do? Changes the definition. It's the same way they decreased near misses."

Fear and threats.

"Normally when the computer fails on you," says another controller, "it goes blank or it flashes a sign like 'Not Updating Data'—or something like that. But this day it just froze. The dots were still flashing but it wasn't updating. So I didn't realize it was frozen for quite a while."

"A while?" I asked. "How long?"

"I don't remember," he said evasively. "But...well over 30 seconds. Maybe [shamefacedly] over a minute."

"Finally someone yelled 'Watch out, it's frozen!' and I realized that planes I thought were 60, 80 miles apart were...I didn't know who or where they were. So I started calling the pilots to squawk ident [verbally identify themselves]. Then I remembered an aircraft I had told to turn because someone else was heading toward him in the same altitude. I got him on the mike and he said, 'I saw him, we already missed each other.' He must have reported it as a near miss."

"At the review board it was mentioned that I did everything humanly possible."

But still I should have been able to catch it in time. So I was found to be the primary cause of the incident. You see, they will never accept that they spent all that money on computers that don't work.

"But that's not the main point. 'Til recently we had an immunity program, by which anyone involved in a near miss—a controller, a pilot, even a stewardess—could report it to NASA. With this information NASA could figure out the real sources of systems errors. And the person who reported it would be immune from penalty unless, of course, he was really negligent. So everyone reported and you could get a pretty reliable idea of the real problems."

"Then Langhorne Bond [FAA director until January 1981] promised to cut down the number of near misses. Which he did by cutting the immunity program. Now, if I'm involved in three incidents I could be dismissed. They don't say they will dismiss me, just they can. But with that hanging over your head, you don't report near misses unless you're sure someone else saw them."

"So the same way they cut down on outages, that's the way they cut down on near misses. It's just cover your ass."

Suddenly everyone seems to have a story to tell. I'm trying to keep up with the moving picket line while scribbling as fast as I can and tripping over strollers in the clogged-up airport entrance.

Suddenly a hand descends on my

shoulder.

"FLY BLIND."

"What?" I look up at the only black controller I've seen so far.

"You just write, I'll guide."

"The FAA has a book of regulations, the bible we call it," says one man. "For instance in certain weather, certain runway conditions, you can handle 80 planes an hour at LaGuardia. But if you actually ran them at 80 for any length of time they'd call it a slowdown. And it would be a slowdown. The planes would pile up. When we had our slowdown in '76 that's all we did, go by the book and they brought us to court."

"If you actually follow their rules they'll remove you from your position and discipline you. So you're always working above the book. But if there's an accident or a near miss, what do you know?...The controller was violating the regulations at the time."

"Listen," says a controller from the far side of the picket line, "did you hear any rush of planes at nine? No, of course not. Now they're spreading them out. And if you listen you won't hear all those planes flying at 350 [35,000 feet] just because it's the cheap way [fuel economy]. They're finally spreading them out too. But they wouldn't listen to it from us."

"Of course not," answers a controller from the near side. That's what the strike is about. Input."

Continued on facing page

CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is \$20.00 for two insertions and \$10.00 for each additional insert, for copy of 40 words or less (additional words are 35¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of Bill Rehm.

CHICAGO, IL

September 16

"What We Can Do: Countering the Right's Offensive." Bob Breving, AFSCME and Chris Riddiough, NAM. At Cross Currents Hall, 3208 N. Wilton, Wednesday, 7:30 p.m. Auspices: Chicago DSOC.

September 26

"Is There a Danger in the U.S.?"—Panel discussion with Rev. Ben Chavis (Wilmington 10), Silva Kushner (Chicago Peace Council), Chokwe Lumumba (Republic of New Africa), Jitu Weusi (Black United Front), Barry Weisberg (UNITE! newspaper). A UNITE! Forum. Saturday, 7:00 p.m., Blackstone Hotel, 636 Michigan Ave., (312) 238-6095.

October 2-3

Jobs, Energy and Economic Growth. Conference on Progressive Approaches to Reindustrialization, Calumet College, Whiting, Ind. (25 mi. east of Chicago). Co-spon-

sored by NAM and DSOC. Speakers: Michael Harrington, Barry Commoner, Roberta Lynch. Workshops include: Crisis in Steel; Synthetic Fuels; Reindustrialization and Energy; Plant Closings and the Black Community; Job Loss and Women Workers. Panel: Reindustrialization and Public Control of the Economy. Cost: \$15. For more information contact: Bill Barclay, NAM, 3244 N. Clark, Chicago, IL 60657, (312) 871-7700.

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October 10

"Primer Course on Candidate Development" Workshop. Learn how to become a winning candidate from a team of experts. Tuition: \$50. Must pre-register. Information: Laurel Springs Institute, 813 S. Hope St., Los Angeles, CA 90017, or call (213) 625-1956.

BUFFALO, NY

October 3

Union Democracy Working Conference: "Your Rights in Your Union." O'Brien Hall, Amherst campus, Law School—SUNY. Speakers include: H.W. Benson, James Atleson, Robert Rabin, Judith Schneider, Frank Schonfeld and others. For details contact: Association for Union Democracy, 215 Park Ave. South, New York, NY 10003. (212) 473-0606.

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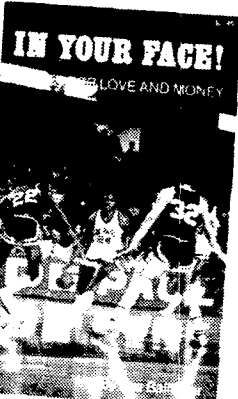
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sports are at times exploitative, racist, sexist, and just plain ugly.

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Continued from facing page

The third most important strike demand after the 32-hour week and 20 years to pension was played by a PATCO negotiator as the right "to be included in decisions about the purchase of equipment and to have input into the development of procedures and use of equipment."

Up until now I've been misled by both the FAA and PATCO's own muddled spokesmen about the central demands of the controllers' strike. Money is beside the point. Strikes for input, for respect, or for a chance to do the job better are not altogether new. But they are difficult

to translate into traditional union demands.

I was surprised to see the Boy Scoutish pride that controllers take in the safety of their system. Rightly or wrongly, they feel they are more concerned than the FAA. Yet they are now being blamed for the entire strike, just as they're blamed for near misses and blamed for their own high blood pressure.

Five days after these picket line conversations, the FAA announced that it will spend one billion dollars on a new computer system. The stated objectives of the new system are to eliminate the formerly

denied outages and to use fewer skilled controllers.

Hearing the announcement made me think of the most oft repeated slogan of the proud but perhaps overconfident air traffic controllers: Computers don't separate planes; controllers separate planes.

Right now, with or without unions, with or without strikes, the main goal of automation in every industry, public or private, is to eliminate the need for people who understand what's going on. The work is deliberately broken down into simpler and smaller "modules" in order to make workers cheaper and more easily

replaceable.

Systems like these may work 99 percent of the time. When the 1 percent emergency arises, where will we find the worker who remembers what it's all about and cares?

Skilled workers who care should be a national treasure. Yet to Reagan and the FAA it's worth a billion dollars to replace them. And it was worth this strike to deny them input.

Barbara Garson is the author of the play *MacBird* and most recently of *All the Livelong Day: The Meaning and De-meaning of Work*.

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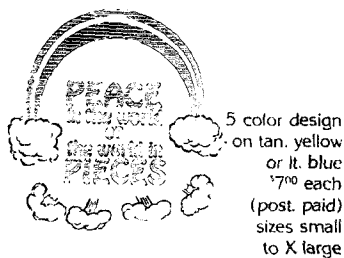
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SAFELY

PATCO workers on the picket line say they know what's wrong with the system, but the FAA ignores them. They're worried about automation plans that, they say, will increase job stress and danger in the skies.

By Barbara Garson

"MAYBE YOU'RE ONLY A JOURNALIST," says Eugene Rodriguez, air traffic controller, "but every writer is some kind of artist. So you can understand air traffic control."

"For instance, I'm sitting there [LaGuardia tower] with 15 to 20 departures and 15 to 20 arrivals. I have to mix them. Of course I can always fit 'em in three miles apart, like it says in the book, with a little waiting and a little rushing. That would be like you just getting down the facts. But once in a while I can slip them into a perfect pattern—like you turning the perfect phrase. Everything flowing, everything *exactly* right. And when I get home that night, I don't have to drink."

"This is what I mean. U.S. Air, when I clear him for a takeoff, he'll do it immediately. Because they get paid from gate to gate. If he gets there early, he makes more money. But New York Air is paid on salary. Clear New York Air for a takeoff and he'll adjust his seat belt, look for a stewardess, take a sip of coffee."

"So in a slot between two arrivals I don't send in New York Air, I send in U.S. Air."

"And American Airlines, once he's airborne, he'll reduce his power by 30 percent. It's a company policy on fuel economy. So if I just launched American I got to give him a little extra room before the next departure. And if it's U.S. Air I'll give him a quarter of a mile more because he's gonna be off like *that*."

"Now my supervisor don't know that. He don't run planes. And it's not in the book either. So how they gonna replace that kind of expertise?"

Like Rodriguez, 85 percent of air traffic controllers are veterans—the great majority white Vietnam veterans in their 30s. All air traffic controllers enter the profession physically fit. Yet 89.2 percent are medically disqualified before they reach retirement (most often through high blood pressure and other stress diseases). But stressed or not, fired or not, the air traffic controller's obsession is controlling the traffic in the air.

Plane talk.

On the long oval picket line stretching the length of LaGuardia's terminals the striking controllers talk about nothing but planes.

"See, the job," explains a blond PATCO picket, "is to separate planes. First you take a position—that's a three dimensional air-space that you own. Any planes that come into your position you keep them 1,000 feet apart in altitude and five miles apart back to front, side to side."

"So you sit in this big, dim, windowless room [radar controllers, unlike airport tower controllers, can be far removed from the actual sights and sounds of planes]. With one ear you're listening to the pilots and transmitting. With the other ear you're listening to the phone lines—that's other controllers because you gotta accept any plane that they send in to your position, just like you gotta hand off any plane you send into theirs. Then with your third ear you listen to all the controllers in the room to get the general picture of any conflicts that could be coming your way. And with your fourth ear you listen to the supervisor who might be saying 'spin

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These striking air controllers in Houston register the same concerns as those interviewed in New York for this article.

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'em' or 'eat 'em' or better still 'go out to chow.'

"Meanwhile one hand holds a pencil to update strips—computer print-outs to which you have to add the altitude and route of the tin [planes] you hand off. The other hand types into the computer key-pack. The third hand is for the buttons of the transmitter and telephones."

"...No you don't use your teeth—except to gnash when your radar goes down."

"Then your eyes, they're mostly on the scope, which shows all the targets [planes under control], which in your position could be 2 or 22. (Calm positions can suddenly explode.) When the radar is working—the alpha numeric—the targets have tags that give you the identity of the plane—like Eastern 134, with an update every six seconds on its altitude and speed. But that system goes down at least once a day and you never know when, so really you gotta just

and in control, 'if you think there's a dangerous situation you can enter a hole.'

"Huh?"

"Get on the phone. Hand something off. But of course you've got to calculate the burden on..."

"No I don't mean calculate. I mean what if you have to *stop for a second*?"

"HUHHH???" Now it's the controllers' turn to be lost.

"But planes in the sky don't stop!"

"They're coming at each other at 600 miles an hour?" "Stop for a second?" I asked about 30 men. The concept is completely incomprehensible.

Total stress.

The rate of high blood pressure among air traffic controllers is about four times the national average.

I spoke to Dr. Donald A. Watkin, chief of the Occupational Health Divi-



memorize every target in your position."

"What?" I asked. "Your radar goes down?"

"The alpha numeric, maybe two, three outages a day."

"So you memorize every plane that comes into the area? How can that be?"

"Go ask the FAA. That's what the strike is about."

"Look," I said, "with planes flying into your position, and strips and handoffs and radios and phones and transmitters and scopes and the radar going down, what if it just gets to be too much?"

"Well then," he answers deliberately

sion of the FAA. Quoting an article from a Navy journal, he explained that "hypertension is related to personality rather than workplace stress." He listed the personality defects of hypertensive controllers: poor impulse control; sociopathic personalities; inability to detach from the job; higher-than-average dissatisfaction with management. On this theory controllers who are decertified for high blood pressure are now routinely denied disability pensions.

In 1977 the FAA received a commissioned study of its employees. The now hard-to-get Rose Report identified poor management policies as stress-causing and found high levels of many stress indicators. Dr. Robert Jenkins, co-author of the report, told me, "The 400 con-

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